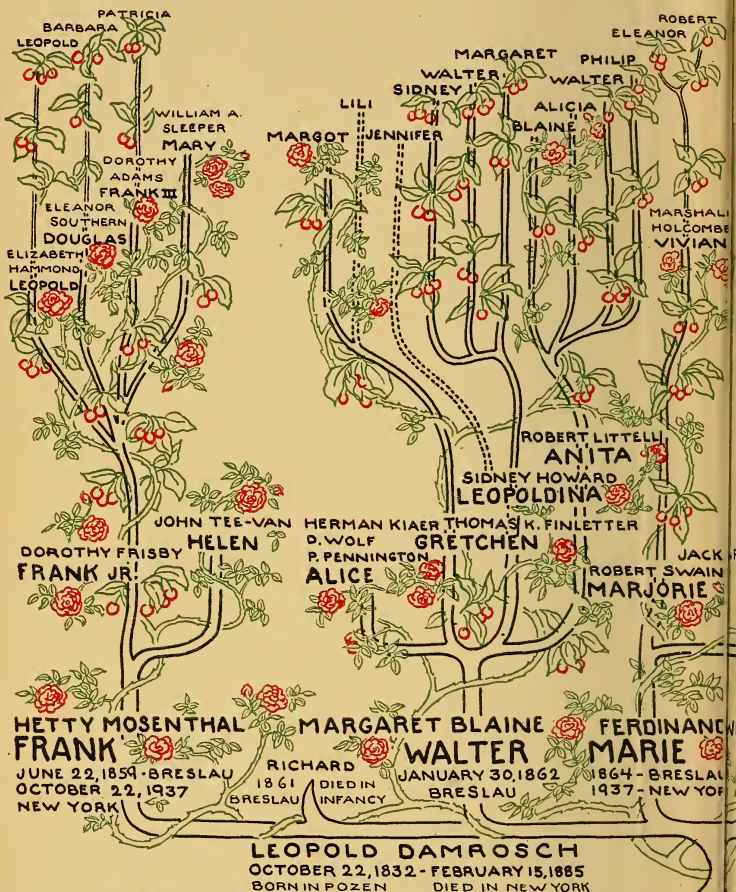


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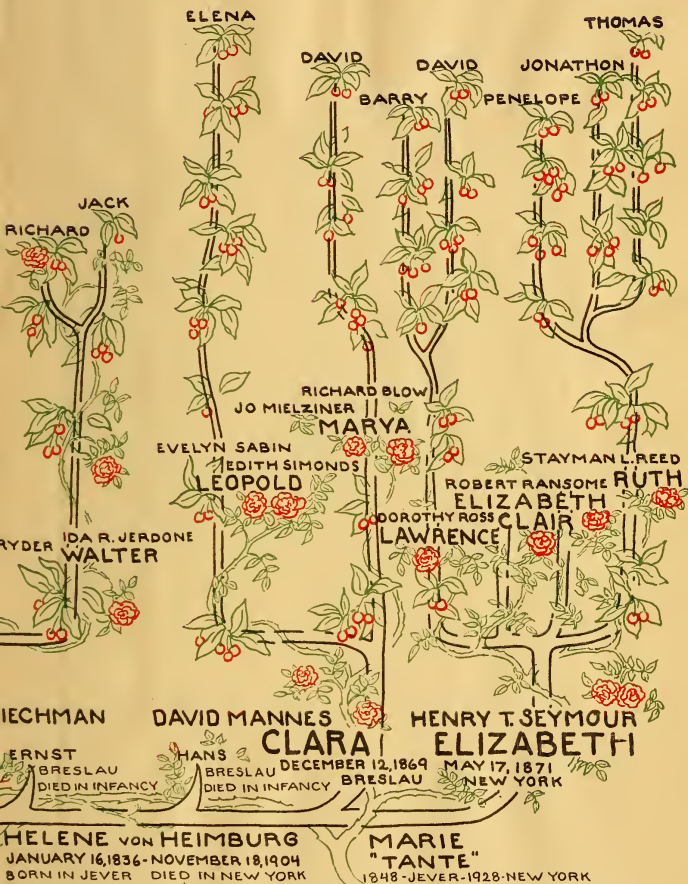
POLAND

FOR LEOPOLD

AND



# HELENE DAMROSCH-1832-1944




FOR HELENE THEY GO BACK TO NORTH GERMANY

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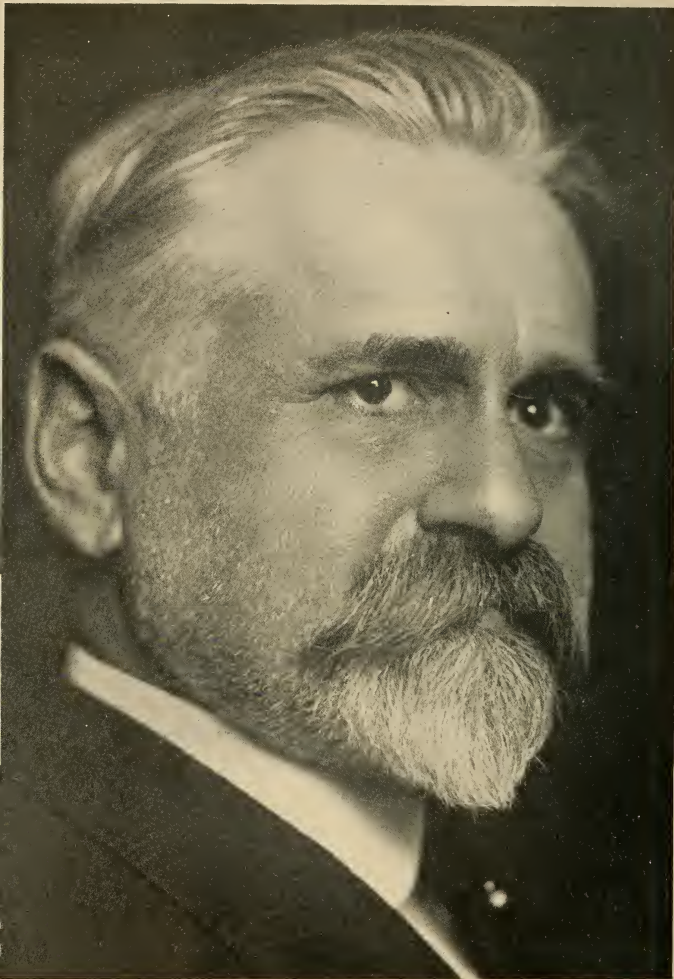
FRANK DAMROSCH

*LET THE PEOPLE SING*









Frank Chambers



# FRANK DAMROSCH

## *LET THE PEOPLE SING*

BY

LUCY POATE STEBBINS

AND

RICHARD POATE STEBBINS

FOREWORD BY

WALTER DAMROSCH



1945

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to Mark the Fiftieth Anniversary of the  
Founding of the People's Singing Classes in 1892

IN TRIBUTE TO HIS MEMORY

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TO  
HETTY DAMROSCH



Monuments may rise  
    To great generals;  
Halls of Fame  
    May house the sculptured forms  
        of great statesmen:  
None shall rise so high,  
Nor be so firmly set,  
    As the monument  
    Invisible,  
We have builded  
    In our hearts  
        These many years  
        To our  
            Frank Damrosch.

—JULIUS HENRY COHEN

## FOREWORD

THANKS to our father, Dr. Leopold Damrosch, my brother Frank and I grew up in an atmosphere of music, intense and beautiful. It surrounded us from our childhood years in Germany, for our father was a great musician and idealist, and his personal and intimate friendship with Liszt, Wagner, and others of the "new school" often brought them at his invitation to Breslau. There he incessantly, but sometimes despairingly, endeavored to make a sluggish public understand and appreciate the musical creations of Liszt, Wagner, and Berlioz. It was uphill work, and in 1871 he accepted an invitation to come to New York, and soon decided that America was the country where he could make a home for his family and develop an understanding and sympathy for the "new school." In quick succession he founded the New York Oratorio Society and the New York Symphony Society.

During our New York school years, Frank and I had continued our studies at the piano, and I had definitely decided to make music my profession. But Frank, in spite of his undoubted talent and love for music, all too modestly thought that his talent was not great enough, and after consultations with our father, he went to Denver, Colorado, there to start on a business career.

This book describes what a desert Denver was for music lovers at that period, and how Frank spent all his leisure time in creating something that would satisfy the yearnings in his own heart. He officiated as organist in two churches and one synagogue. He developed a little orchestra and a chorus, and finally all Denver implored him to drop business and devote all his time to music.

In the meantime, after the complete breakdown of an Italian Opera season under Henry Abbey in 1884 at the Metropolitan Opera House, James Roosevelt, its President,

called on my father and invited him to organize a German Opera Company and to direct a season of opera in 1884-85. The success of this season was tremendous, but so was my father's work, not only as musical director, but also as manager. A week before the end of the season, he became ill, and I had to conduct two of the performances. My father died a few days later.

He had contracted for a spring tour to begin in Chicago a week after the closing of the New York season, and I had to take his place as conductor and manager, young and inexperienced as I was. A terrific snowstorm halted our special train a whole day, and we arrived in Chicago at eight o'clock on the night of our first performance (Wagner's *Tannhäuser*). To my great joy, my brother Frank met our train before we arrived in Chicago and told me that a large audience was patiently waiting for our arrival. The performance began at ten o'clock and ended at 1:00 A.M., and I can never forget the generosity and kindness of that Chicago audience.

As Frank and I sat together at supper after the performance, I urged him to return to New York and to join with me in carrying on the work which our father had begun so courageously since 1871. Frank agreed with me, and from then on for many years, we endeavored, together and in complete harmony, to follow in father's footsteps.

This book tells vividly how great and important my brother's activities were in the development of music in our country. He founded the People's Choral Union and the Musical Art Society—an exquisite chorus of sixty professional singers. But his greatest contribution was undoubtedly the founding of The Institute of Musical Art. Many of the foremost musicians of today, who graduated from this school, acknowledge their indebtedness to what it so generously and wisely gave them.

WALTER DAMROSCH.

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FRANK DAMROSCH

*LET THE PEOPLE SING*



## CHAPTER I

### THE FOUNDING OF A HOUSE

(1832-1859)

THIS is the story of Frank Damrosch, in the years of his boyhood called Franz, the name his godfather Liszt bestowed upon him. But since it is necessary for the understanding of any man's life to know something of his ancestors, we shall commence with a period twenty-seven years before Frank's birth, which is, unfortunately, as early as we have trustworthy records.

His father, Leopold Damrosch, a great man in his day, was born October 22, 1832, in Posen, that Prussian-Polish town which lies upon the Warthe River, some hundred miles north of Breslau and about fifty miles within the late Polish border. Leopold Damrosch was the first child of an intelligent, uneducated father, and the only child of the young mother whose death followed hard upon his birth. The want of a mother mattered less to the little boy because his father, in accordance with the ancient custom, soon took to wife her twenty-two-year-old sister, Dorothea; but the circumstance of his mother's death helped to make him a special favorite with his grandmother.

The father of Leopold Damrosch held liberal views both in politics and religion, but he knew nothing of art, and had not reached a state of cultivation whence he could realize that there were men who must live by it—men who, deprived of the esthetic, would consume themselves. To him music, for instance, was only an amusement of the rich, an insufficient means of livelihood for the lazy. He was ambitious for his son, and decided to make a lawyer of him; the father was young enough, hopeful enough, to

believe that all restrictions against Jews would be removed in Prussia by the time Leopold was ready to practice.

When the boy was five years old, he was sent to a small private school, and, after a period whose length he could never determine, was removed from it in favor of another where lessons were somewhat more serious. There he learned rapidly to read and write—and to sing. He was a docile little fellow and extremely intelligent, but he did not enjoy reading because no interesting books were furnished him. As for singing, it was native to him; he did not realize that he was learning, but it made him happy.

Other children had by this time been born into the Damrosch home. The parents were poor; weariness and anxiety pervaded the house. Poverty kept the family well below that plane of leisure and good will on which children are told stories and look forward to celebrations and surprises. There was no music there, nothing to feed the hungry imagination of the gifted little boy. Once his grandmother took him to Breslau on a visit, but he was too young and sensitive to feel much beyond the confusion of a strange city and a heightened sense of loneliness.

In the spring of 1840, when he was seven years old, a wonderful thing happened in his small, drab life. His mother's people may have been sympathetic with music; whatever the reason, the grandmother gave him a violin. It was the first time he had owned anything which everyone else did not possess; the Damrosches were not so poor that clothes and food seemed other than incidental to life. He took the gift with wonder, and handled it with such happy dexterity that the old lady was enchanted and promised to pay for some lessons. Time meant so little to the boy that he did not know how long he studied under his first teacher; but a day came when the man said he could teach him no more—his little pupil had reached the limit of his own poor proficiency—and he would recommend him to

a better master. The family thought of the cheap fiddle as Leopold's toy, the grandmother was proud of his childish accomplishment; no one understood that to Leopold the violin had become the symbol of whatever was holy and desirable. When a year later he entered the Gymnasium, it was much more than a private pleasure; it had grown to be a secret passion, even a purpose, though of that he was as yet unconscious. He was a little boy who had needed much and he had had nothing, until the grandmother gave him the instrument, which was now all in all.

Such children are seldom physically strong. Just as he was ready to leave the preparatory school for the Gymnasium, he fell ill with some unidentified complaint and had to spend several weeks in bed. Although the father was ambitious, and Leopold was the only instrument for his ambition, he was unwilling to drive him too hard, and willingly agreed with the new teachers to enter the boy in a class lower than that to which his rating entitled him. Leopold had always liked school because it was less dull than home, and in the Gymnasium he went on liking it. His teachers favored him because he was well behaved and extremely intelligent, and their friendly attitude made his long days fairly pleasant. He could keep up with his class without studying, so that no one knew how perfunctorily he did his work. Only the surface of his mind was open to his little public; about his intense inner life no one knew or cared. Yet as he sat, patient, in his seat, his fingers were playing exercises on his knees under the desk. The handsome, frail boy with attentive gray eyes was wishing himself off in a quiet corner with his violin, even while he respectfully answered his teacher's question.

The years passed. He paid little attention to the poverty of his home because he was accustomed to it. Nor did the political situation of the middle and later 1840's interest

him. From the few musical people with whom he was acquainted, he heard of the conservatory which Mendelssohn had founded in Leipzig, and determined that he would go there to study. He was now sixteen, and his musical horizon had broadened until he wished to study more than the violin; he had already written down various musical ideas and believed he could compose; he had organized a music club among his friends in the Gymnasium. Unfortunately, this society was already breaking up; some of the boys' families were moving out of Posen; other members knew they would have to study so hard in the last year at school that they would not have time for anything else. Nor could Leopold be longer oblivious to what must be his own situation in the school year beginning at Easter 1848; original research was expected of all students in the highest class, and his slack methods would no longer serve to keep him out of trouble. For these reasons, he thought best to leave Posen immediately and travel to Leipzig. Without any idea that the political situation could affect the education of Leopold Damrosch, he broached the matter to his father.

He spoke in April, just after the famous "March Days" of 1848. The Prussian King had promised universal suffrage, but the astute Jews of Posen had no illusory hopes. The elder Damrosch, wrapped up in the local struggle between German nationalists and Polish separatists, was in no mood to listen sympathetically to an impracticable scheme. He told the boy bluntly that music was not for such as he—he must finish at the Gymnasium and then go to Berlin and study law.

Up to this time Leopold had been docile, because it had not occurred to him that his dreary life could be altered. Now that he knew what he wanted, he did not submit easily. He fell ominously silent. He told himself that if his mother were alive, *she* would not have crossed his

ambition; he scarcely spoke to her poor sister. He became careless in his appearance, and inaudibly reproached his family by playing the sloven. Music, forbidden at home, was carried into the houses of his friends. The Damrosch household had never been a happy one; in the period of Leopold's rebellion it was intolerably sad. He was the eldest, looked up to by the little ones and admired by the parents, who had hoped great things of him.

He determined to run away. Leipzig was several hundred miles distant, he knew no one there, and he had no money. Nevertheless, "with the help of God," as he told himself, for even his independent spirit felt the need of a backer, he would escape from Posen and make his way to Mendelssohn's conservatory. His secret was ill-guarded. Perhaps he was not really sorry when a letter fell into his father's hands and his foolish plan was exposed. One day the elder Damrosch asked him sadly: Could he find "salvation" nowhere but in music? A "Yes" broke from the boy, and the longing stamped on his face added an intensity of meaning. The father gave his consent, not without tears.

The boy's stubborn will had built the barrier between them, and his happiness demolished it. The united family set to work to prepare for his departure. His father undertook to accompany him, and Leopold was delighted; he realized that he knew too little of the world to settle himself in it; he was glad of help, provided it was given to further his own plans. The mother had the easier task of setting to rights his meager wardrobe; the poor father must raise money, not only for the journey, but also for Leopold's maintenance at the conservatory. He was a proud man and could not at any time have enjoyed asking his friends for help, but in those uneasy days he knew that no one could afford to loan him anything. To Posen came rumors that the parliament in Frankfort would accomplish

nothing toward German unity in the face of Prussian and Austrian opposition; everywhere there was unrest. As yet it was not certain that Frederick William IV would refuse to head the German Confederation; not until May would Prussian troops fire upon German patriots in their last desperate stand against reaction, but already farseeing liberals were realizing the hopelessness of their situation. Yet the father and son contrived to raise a trifle of money, and the boy felt sure the sum was equal to the enterprise.

It may well be that the experience sickened him. Now that he had all within his power—permission, clothing, money enough—he counted the cost to his family and found it was too great. He would not accept such sacrifices. He folded away his dream, told them that he would complete his course at the Gymnasium, go then to the University of Berlin, and study law. It is uncertain how long this period of *Sturm und Drang* had lasted. Afterward he recalled it as a year of revolt; probably it was but a matter of weeks.

His capitulation had the best of results; it insured that eventually there would evolve not merely a violinist, but a musician of European culture. The formidable year at the Gymnasium proved a happy one, because the work required was of the very nature to interest him. He had read little and had not thought he could enjoy reading, but in preparation for his law course at the University, it was necessary to familiarize himself with German literature. Every German boy knew Schiller, but Leopold had read only the inescapable among his works. Goethe, Schlegel, Lessing, Herder, Heine awaited him. He learned that music belonged to a broader world.

Most of his reading was from the romantic school, in whose writers he recognized his own appetite for the ideal, the faraway, the long ago. He was ambitious, and began to imagine himself a great author of the future; this forced



him ruefully to lay aside Jean Paul Richter lest the rugged style injure his own manner. The stage attracted him, and he opened his mind to great dramatists, adding Shakespeare to the ranks of his admired. In the lower grades when he had read Homer, he had translated only words; but now Posen was less real to him than Troy-town, and he wrote with awe, "I entered places hitherto unknown to me."

For the first time he felt responsibility for his family. He took a pupil whom he tutored, not in music but in general subjects, so that his own maintenance would cost his father less. He did not neglect his violin, although practicing was now but one of his interests and not, as in the past, all-important. He discovered that he could draw. The freedom of his life, within limits which had once threatened to crush him, suggests that what he had really wished was not so much to study at Leipzig as to have the power to accept or to reject his own destiny. Leopold Damrosch could have been successful in any pursuit which called for a high degree of intelligence, creative ability, and cultivated feeling. But in his heart he had not abandoned a musical career. In the thesis required of him as a graduate from the Gymnasium he wrote cryptically, "I will pass over in silence the extent to which I have actually given up my intention."

The authorities required each student to furnish a document narrating the story of his life up to the time of leaving school. Leopold's was tinged with gloom; *The Sorrows of Werther* had not lost its influence upon provincial youth. Conventional expressions of gratitude to parents and teachers mingled curiously with his boyish bewilderment over the chaos of his emotions and his wonder that his inner life could be so full of activity while so little happened to him from without. The only overt events of which he wrote were the gift of the violin and his great rebellion.

No reasonable person could help sympathizing with his protest against having to write a thesis about his private business: "Can one be blamed for not wanting to pour out one's heart to make common property of what was the joy and happiness of one's own soul?"

In the spring of 1849, when he was in his seventeenth year, he exchanged the Gymnasium of provincial Posen for the University of Berlin, which he entered according to program as a law student. The following winter Posen suffered from a disastrous flood. The elder Damrosch, engaged in rescue work, stood for many hours to his waist in the icy waters of the Warthe. His legs became paralyzed. He never regained their use, and, having become a burden, vanished from history.

Leopold had been uneasy because he had supposed that he was missing all experiences of life except those of which he was dimly conscious within himself. In the coming years he would act and be acted upon by circumstances as all men are, but his inner world would always be more real to him than the outer which impinged upon it. Yet he had already acted twice with decision, once when he determined to go to the conservatory and again when he submitted to his father. Now, at the end of one semester, he transferred to the college of medicine. He had decided that he could not endure the study or the practice of law. Being entirely self-supporting, he could feel himself at liberty to change his course; but he did not on that account absolve himself of his promise to graduate from the University.

Leopold supported himself in Berlin by tutoring, as he had done in Posen. He gave no violin lessons, perhaps thinking himself incompetent, perhaps unable to get pupils where competition was keen. But he practiced, played chamber music with new friends, and, when he had accumulated the price of a lesson, went to Hubert Ries, a member of

the famous family of Bonn. In Posen he had worked out original musical ideas, and in Berlin he studied composition with Siegfried Dehn, among whose pupils were numbered Rubinstein, Glinka, Kullak, and Cornelius.

At the Gymnasium in Posen he had been considered a satisfactory student, but no prodigy; at the University he showed unquestionable ability in such various ways that no one critic was competent to gauge their sum. Although he spent several hours daily practicing, and further hours teaching, he completed the medical course a semester under the prescribed period. In an epidemic of cholera he attended the sick and was assisted in his duties by his stepmother, who had left her crippled husband to the care of the younger children in Posen while she nursed in Berlin. Her stepson, too, fell ill. She cared for him tenderly and when he had recovered, went home to her old burdened life.

Toward the end of his student period, he served a kind of internship with Dr. Albrecht von Gräfe, a brilliant young oculist who had established a private clinic in Berlin, and was making that city the world's ophthalmological center. Dr. Gräfe was four years older than Leopold and, like him, suffered from a respiratory disorder. He was a kind and exceptionally lovable man who took a deep personal interest in his students.

Dr. Leopold Damrosch's thesis was accepted by the Faculty of Medicine August 31, 1854. A printed brochure of twenty-five pages, it bore the Latin title, *De oculorum diphtheritide et trachomate nonnulla* (Researches on ocular diphtheritis and trachoma). His diploma was embellished with *Magna cum laude*. Thus before his twenty-second birthday he was qualified to practice medicine and, if he wished, to become an eye specialist. Under Gräfe's guidance he might go far.

Whether his decision to abandon medicine and return

to music cost him an inner conflict will never be known. It is almost inconceivable that he had spent five years keeping a promise made to the father who had not been able to assist him, and who was now done with struggling; and it is unlikely that he could have finished his course with such distinction if he felt no vocation for it. At any rate, he was resolved to be neither a doctor who played the violin, nor a violinist who played at being a doctor; and the decision, when he made it, was as clear-cut as a cameo. Leopold Damrosch would never practice medicine.

He did not settle in Posen, a place of unhappy memories and little culture. Lingerin in Berlin among friends, he began to participate in private musicals. He took pupils and studied himself. Then Franz Liszt heard of Dr. Leopold Damrosch and summoned him to Weimar:

Dear Sir and Friend:

I shall be very much pleased if today's letter is the means of bringing good news to you. The enclosure from Mr. von Beaulieu is evidence that I am keeping my promise of taking advantage of the first vacancy in our orchestra to offer you an engagement here in Weimar. From a material point of view the position I can offer is by no means brilliant and I am also uneasy lest you should be influenced by the German's unfortunate craving for titles and hesitate to accept a place as a first violinist at the second desk.

As far as I am concerned, I subscribe to the principle that *the man makes the place and not the place the man*. Therefore you may be convinced that I have not the slightest intention of hurting your artistic feelings by asking or even trying to persuade you to take the place of Mr. A. Ritter, who has left for Stettin as a concert-master. So far as it is in my power I shall be very willing to do my share towards the improvement and easing of your situation. Weimar is a musical working-place where any serious-minded and gifted artist can make a pleasant position for himself by his conscientious efforts.

So, don't get in the prevailing rut; don't let us mirror our-

selves in the shallow waters of mediocrity, but let us continue to work on and on. This should be our motto! If you agree with me and if you are satisfied with my proposal, your assistance will be very welcome. In about ten days hence I shall take a trip to Hungary and if possible I should appreciate your favorable answer before that time.

Farewell! and rest assured of my most friendly and true interest with which I remain, as always

Your most devoted friend,

FRANZ LISZT

P.S. I need not emphasize my ambition to secure a highly capable first violinist for the second desk. It's likely that there will soon be a vacancy at the first desk, also.

Here was such an opportunity as he had long desired, and he was presently in Weimar, where two years still remained of that brilliant decade through which Liszt made the little city as glorious as had Goethe in the early years of the century. The great virtuoso, composer, and teacher had paid his tribute to Beethoven, the hero of the past, when the monument at Bonn was completed. At Weimar he was championing heroes of the future, making known the works of Berlioz and Wagner in a spirit of selfless devotion. It was his unsuccessful defense of Peter Cornelius which was to bring about his severance from the court two years later. Dr. Leopold Damrosch became a friend of Peter Cornelius, who was still a young man and had been, like himself, a pupil of Dehn. Damrosch's youth, his new friendships, and the modern atmosphere of Weimar were among the influences which were to make him a minor prophet of the future. Only Weimar could have fitted him for the unique position he was eventually to fill in the musical life of the New World.

If in the past he had had love affairs, his reticence kept them secret; in Weimar he fell in love with Helene von Heimburg and married her within a year. She was a young

singer whose family did not wish their name paraded on the stage. Having her own pride, she was unwilling to change it, and thus was singing in the opera at Weimar, far distant from her home in Oldenburg, at Jever near the North Sea. She was twenty-one and looked the great lady. Although so young, she was majestic, tall and finely built, with an excellent stage presence. Liszt had trained her to sing Agathe in *Der Freischütz*; under his direction she had sung Ortrud in a Weimar performance of *Lohengrin*; she might well have told her lover that he asked too much when he wished her to retire from the opera on their marriage. But she was a sensible and unselfish young woman and agreed to leave the stage, helped to her decision by the fact that in spite of her aristocratic family she had had a rigorous bringing-up, one which fitted her to make a good wife to a poor young genius.

Her father was a great man in Jever, the Oberamtmann of Oldenburg, holding besides a lucrative post at the newly created port of Wilhelmshaven. His means were straitened by the size of his family; the nine boys received excellent educations, but his daughters had to content themselves with the advantages of the school at Jever, supplemented by private lessons in French and music.

All the von Heimbürg children could sing. Their mother had been a wonderful, vital woman with a magnificent voice—a soloist in Jever's yearly oratorio concerts—and her babies sang before they could talk. But Marie, the little fourteenth, never heard the mother's voice, for Madam von Heimbürg died at her birth.

Some years before, Helene had been adopted by a well-to-do aunt in the city of Oldenburg who promised to give her ward every advantage, even to voice training. Helene went to her aunt from a house overrun by children, where the days were filled with music by a buoyant-spirited mother; there were no children at Aunt Wilhelmina Toel's.

The house was silent and appallingly tidy, and the future mother of Frank Damrosch soon learned which kind of home was the happier. But the aunt taught her everything a girl could learn about housekeeping, and, when Helene's voice showed its fine quality, sent her to Leipzig to study. The girl's training completed, she joined the Grand Ducal Opera Company at Weimar.

Helene knew herself prepared to make marvelous economies, but both she and her betrothed realized that they could never exist on his Weimar salary. Dr. Damrosch broke through his habitual reserve and consulted Liszt. The genial maestro made the customary joke; he would help out the lovers if they would promise to name the first boy after him. Relying on his assurance, Helene and Leopold were married on August 30, 1858, two months before the husband's twenty-sixth birthday. She was four years his junior.

They were enchanted when Liszt's influence secured for Dr. Damrosch the post of conductor of the Breslau Philharmonic Society. The title, indeed, was better than the reality, for the Society was moribund and Breslau itself scarcely less philistine than in the residence of Carl Maria von Weber, half a century before. They set up house-keeping in a flat, the first of many, for they would be a family of frequent moves. The sympathetic, charming young Dr. Damrosch made friends among the patrons of music, most of whom were Jewish; and when at the end of the season he resigned from the Philharmonic, for which he could anticipate no respectable future, he organized with their assistance the Breslau Orchestra Society, which he was able to maintain during the rest of his life in Europe.

The decision against his wife's appearance in opera did not curtail her singing of *Lieder*, for which her stateliness, her sincerity, and the quality of her voice admirably suited her. The young couple were much in demand, he with



his violin and she singing while he accompanied her on the piano. During their first winter together, 1858-59, they gave many recitals; the style of dress concealed the alteration in her figure. Spring passed and Midsummer Night; the next day, June 22, Franz Heino Damrosch was born to the young parents.



## CHAPTER II

### A MID-CENTURY BOY IN BRESLAU (1859-1871)

FRANZ DAMROSCH was too young to be interested in the birth of his first little brother, Richard, to whom Wagner stood godfather. When he was old enough to listen and remember, he learned from family talk that the baby had died, and that Wagner had exclaimed that he would never more stand in that sacred relation to any child, because his evil destiny pursued even the innocent infant linked to him by baptism. If the bereaved father felt that his friend was egoistic in this dramatic outcry, he made no comment; Richard Wagner stood too high in his opinion to have his personal foibles coldly analyzed.

Nor did Franz remember the birth of the second baby, Walter, in 1862. The first of his memories was of soldiers marching down his street in Breslau. The bright colors, music, rhythm of tramping feet delighted the little fellow, but where the troops came from and whither they were going was of no interest to him. Afterwards he understood that they had been Austrians on the way to Denmark to fight over Schleswig-Holstein.

That was early in the summer of 1864. Soon after, his mother took him and baby Walter on a journey to Grandfather von Heimburg's house in Jever. There little Franz was free to wander about the quaint city; castle, courthouse, market place etched themselves upon his memory. The soldiers in Breslau had made only a vivid splash of color and a blare of sound; these sights of a month or two later were never to be forgotten. One day when he was roaming in his solitary fashion, he met with an adventure; a gentleman

gave him a penny. He did not know the donor—a fact which made the transaction peculiarly interesting; to be given a small coin by a relation could happen any day, but the stranger was perhaps a magician or a king in disguise; in the stories his father told him people often turned out that way.

The children's Great-aunt Wilhelmina, who had brought up Helene in Oldenburg, had long ago been widowed and had settled herself in her brother's house at Jever, feeling it her duty to bring up the motherless von Heimburgs. One of these was a young aunt whom the little boys called Tante Marie. She was fifteen, had finished school, and had been confirmed at Easter in a black taffeta frock. She could sing, although she had not so fine a voice as their mother (who was her older sister Helene) and she had learned to play a few pieces on the piano in spite of her father's antagonistic attitude to practicing. Helene scarcely knew this younger sister who was as subdued as she was pretty, but it was decided at Jever that Marie should go to Breslau to live with her. Helene was again expecting a baby, and the younger sister would help with the older children. Besides, it would be wise to remove her from the severe atmosphere created by Aunt Wilhelmina and give her the advantages of town life.

Helene gave a concert for the old friends in Jever who had known her as a child, a memorable occasion in the simple annals of the town. The townspeople rejoiced to see what a success Helene von Heimburg was making of her life, married as she was to a doctor who was also a famous musician, and already the mother of two beautiful boys.

Then the Damrosches went back to Breslau, taking with them shy little Tante Marie. Dr. Damrosch either came after them to Jever or met them in Dresden, for one of Franz's memories was of his mother and father disputing, while they stood on the street before the hotel, whether

they should, or should not, take a cab. He remembered the argument because it was quite unusual for his parents to have one.

Soon they were at home in the apartment on Schweidnitzer Street, showing Tante Marie the sights. She was surprised to see such large rooms and two grand pianos in one of them, but Franz was able to explain that there had to be a big room because the chorus came there to practice, and that both pianos were somehow necessary. He had liked to stand under one of them and beat time for the singers, but the ladies giggled and his father had insisted that he do his conducting in the next room. Now his father wanted Tante Marie to guess which piano was the better, and she guessed wrong and was embarrassed.

That autumn the first girl was born to the Damrosch family and named Marie, after the new Tante. Her christening was made memorable by a dinner at which Richard Wagner was the guest of honor. Dr. Damrosch had arranged to give two concerts of excerpts from Wagnerian works; he had hoped not only to further the musical education of the Breslau public but to assist his friend, who was at that time in dire poverty. If Wagner felt any gratitude, it did not extend beyond the Damrosch family. He thought Breslau a horrid place and complained because Jews went to concerts and dinner parties.

At Marie's christening feast, Franz, according to custom, came in with the dessert, very handsome in his velvet suit. Wagner drew him close. "Has the boy drunk his sister's health?" he asked. The mother pronounced the boy in question too young for champagne, but Wagner set his glass to Franz's eager, laughing mouth.

Wagner might rail against the Jews of Breslau, but without them there would have been few concerts. Among their number were cultivated and charming people, and they proved generous friends. Dr. Damrosch was never

free from financial worries; to have his wife and boys spend the past summer at the von Heimburgs' in Jever had been an assistance because of the difficulty of laying up funds for the slack season. From Jewish friends in Breslau came gifts, unostentatiously sent over from warehouse or factory, lengths of material for small boys' suits or a dress for Tante Marie. The sisters sewed together and were proud of the aristocratic beauty of dark-eyed Franz and of Walter, who was fair like his mother, in the baggy blouses and knickerbockers made sometimes from presents of new goods, sometimes from Helene's voluminous skirts.

Franz was almost seven before he was allowed to go to concerts and sit in the family box. Long before that the concerts had been coming to him, because the soloists, twelve in a season, usually stayed at the apartment in Schweidnitzer Street. There, too, the choruses of men and women practiced regularly, and when Dr. Leopold Damrosch and his friends played chamber music, little Franz was allowed to turn the pages. On the evening of a performance, the janitor would bring to the flat a long box of candles from which his mother took out the required number for the orchestra stands. She always knew the music and how many to dole out. The usual strength of the orchestra was sixty men, but when Berlioz and Wagner numbers were played, it was increased to eighty. Knowledge such as this the children gathered without thought, just as they learned to sing correctly because their mother and Tante Marie sang about their work.

While Franz was still a small boy, his father and mother used to take him with them when they were giving a musical at a near-by estate, such as Count von Schleinitz's or Prince Hatzfeld's. Thus he became accustomed to the magnificence of palaces, with their collections of huge Dresden vases, their porcelain stoves, crimson and gilt sofas, glittering chandeliers which burned sweet-smelling wax

candles, the brilliant uniforms of officers, and ladies in enormous hooped skirts. When the father and mother gave concerts in other towns, the children were left in charge of Tante Marie and the servants, but the parents did not travel great distances from Breslau because they could not afford to do so. The poverty which prevented Dr. Damrosch from hearing the very music he was doing his best to promote was already preparing him for his great decision. He could not go to Dresden when *Die Meistersinger* was given; in 1865 he did visit Munich in a state of great excitement in order to be present at the first performance of *Tristan*; but when he returned, he had sorrowfully to confess that he had not heard it. The performance had been postponed because of a soloist's illness, and he had lacked money to wait for the singer's recovery. There had been a reunion with old friends, a group picture had been taken for which von Bülow and many other famous musicians were grouped around Wagner, but he had missed the consummation of his journey—he had not heard *Tristan*.

In the summer of 1866 there came a second war, a cholera epidemic in Breslau, and a new baby in the Damrosch home. The little boy was named Ernst, but, before the other children could make his acquaintance, they were hurriedly sent out of the way of infection. Sophienau, their place of refuge, lay at the foot of the mountain range which separated their own country of Silesia from Bohemia, into which at that very time General von Moltke was dispatching three armies by three different routes. The town had been hastily chosen for the little Damrosches, because their mother was down with cholera, which seemed a nearer peril than battle. Tante Marie stayed to nurse her, but the baby died—not from the infection, but from lack of proper food.

In their country retreat, Franz and Walter were as free to ramble as at Jever. The meadows were full of wild

flowers, for it was June. A country boy told them that if they lay on the ground, ears pressed to earth, they would hear the guns roar at Trautenau. On July 3, thirty miles from Sophienau, the battle of Sadowa was fought out under the eyes of the King, Moltke, and Bismarck, whose sinister policy of "blood and iron" was vindicating itself while two little boys played in the meadows.

The war was over; it had been only seven weeks long. Neither knowing nor caring if the balance of power in Europe had been disturbed, the children returned to Breslau and found their mother well and strong. Perhaps they had forgotten little Ernst; his absence from the world could not grieve them. They heard that the King and the Crown Prince were to pass through Breslau in triumph; they, too, helped to prepare for the pageant. Their mother's plants made home a bower all winter, but it was now full summer and the gardens were bright with flowers. Together they filled a clothesbasket with bouquets and garlands. Luckily their flat had a balcony and Schweidnitzer Street was on the line of march. The King with his wild whiskers floating under his helmet came riding by, his naked sword pointing at the Crown Prince beside him—not to frighten him or do him an injury but to show that he deserved credit for winning the battle. There were with them not only the usual suite of officers on prancing horses, but the great Bismarck and von Moltke. The little boys saw that their mother was not abashed; she leaned over the balcony rail and flung a wreath; it circled the King's sword and fell around the hilt like a diadem of bright jewels. The King bowed to her, and Walter and Franz exulted.

In 1848, young Leopold Damrosch had known scarcely more of politics than his children did in 1866. Now where Franz saw a memorable and brilliant pageant, his father looked beyond the pomp and glitter. Wars, even when successful, impoverish the land. Complete victory would



no doubt bring wealth, but it would be long before any form of art benefited. For several years Bismarck, intent on militarizing the state, had been fighting parliament. He had won that bloodless battle, had won two wars which were not bloodless, and war with France loomed on the horizon. The Europe in which Dr. Damrosch's children were growing up promised no security. He felt that he himself, now in his mid-thirties, had been shunted off the road to success. In Breslau there were jealousies, envious rivalries. His family was expensive. Another baby, Hans, was born and died of whooping cough; even little funerals cost money. He could lay nothing by for his sons' education. True, in his household everyone had enough to eat and wear, and it never occurred to Franz that they were poor; but he observed that his father was sometimes tired and anxious, and that he could be very stern if a boy did not properly learn his lessons.

Yet Dr. Damrosch was their most charming companion. A favorite room in the flat opened upon the balcony. Inside there was space only for father's chair with Walter on one side, Franz on the other, and Marie at his feet. There could be no better spot for storytelling, for the walls were close about them all, guarding them; and yet just beyond that open door stretched the balcony opening upon the world. It was better to be there than in a box at the opera; for the stage, when father told stories, was as big as all history. He peopled it with goblins and fairies, knights, and heroes. He told them stories he made up as he went along, and stories out of books. Grimm's *Fairy Tales*, Andersen's *Fairy Tales*, the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*—almost all were highly romantic. His children's imaginations were nourished as his had never been.

Formal religious training had little place in the home, although the mother was a Lutheran and the father had been baptized into that communion. He was a practicing

rather than a professing Christian. The children were used to seeing a worn Bible on his desk from which he would read them the Parables, for the New Testament was the dearer to him. The mother taught Franz a little prayer:

Weiss nicht woher ich bin gekommen,  
 Weiss nicht wohin ich werd genommen,  
 Doch eines weiss ich, ob mir ist  
 Eine Liebe, die mich nie vergisst.\*

Franz learned to believe in an ordered universe because everyone in his home was loving and good and well intentioned. Unlike many a boy in England and the United States in the mid-century, he was taught no dogmas which in manhood he must repudiate.

In 1867, a year after Sadowa, when Franz was old enough to go to concerts, a photographer came to the flat to take a picture of the family group. They gathered at the tea table with its large white cloth on which the cups were neatly placed, each with a spoon pointed in a military style. Tante, sad and exquisitely beautiful, stood behind, pouring imaginary coffee into the air; the mother in her chair looked earnest, even grim in her anxiety to have every one appear his best; Marie, a charming baby, and Walter edged close to the grave, bearded father; Franz with hair plastered behind his ears and his pantaloons inadvertently hitched up, sat slightly withdrawn upon his tufted chair, an elbow resting upon a book which lay on the corner of the tea table, an earnest expression on his face which hinted a desire to get back to his reading as soon as the photographer would take away his apparatus. The moment was one of strain; people did not have their

\*From whence I came, I do not know  
 Nor know the way I am to go  
 But this I know, and know full well  
 O'er me an unforgetting love doth dwell.

H. D.



pictures taken everyday; but whatever was stiff in pose or feature could not spoil the impression of a loving family.

Naturally, the little boys fought, but the apartment was large enough so that the mother could give them separate rooms. Nor did they in those days play very much together, for the slight difference in their ages seemed great to boys of five and seven. Walter was Marie's companion, and Franz had made friends with Oswald Storch and Alfred Dyrenfurth.

Oswald lived near by. His mother was a friend of Madam Clara Schumann, who stayed with Madam Storch rather than at the Damrosches' when she came to Breslau. Franz saw the great pianist at both houses, but she was quiet and sad and seemed old to him, and perhaps to his father and mother also. Robert Schumann had died three years before Franz was born; now Clara's home was in Berlin with her children, but she had to leave them on frequent concert tours. With Oswald, Franz played quiet games of an intellectual order. The subject he liked best in school was Greek mythology, from which came some of his father's most delightful stories. The boys wrote plays, made a theater, and cut out and painted little actors which they moved by fine wires. When they dramatized the Fall of Troy, they placed three tiny theaters one behind the other, from which device they obtained a truly impressive vista. The Storchs and Damrosches were invited to see the play. It must have given the father pleasure to find his boy entering "places hitherto unknown" with such happy ease.

Alfred Dyrenfurth lived on his father's estate fifteen miles out of Breslau. Franz visited him in summer, when their games were active and occasionally dangerous. So great a distance meant that he would stay at least a few days at Puschwitz. There were a farm where the boys

could help if they liked, and a park where they could play robber-knights with the assistance of other boys who lived in the village. The Dyrenfurths owned a complete set of armor and were not too careful of it to allow the youngsters to parcel it out among themselves for combats. But this most exciting of games was forbidden after a village boy in a transport of enthusiasm jumped on Franz and injured him severely.

The best outdoor fun of the Breslau winter was provided by the old moat around the ancient fortress, almost continuously frozen during the long cold months. Every afternoon and evening a military band played there, and when night fell, innumerable Chinese lanterns lighted up the splendid uniforms of officers and the charming faces of girls, smiling above their furs. Franz was a little boy, but he was well built and perfectly co-ordinated. He loved to skate, and there was nothing at school he liked so much as the twice-a-week gymnastics when the boys were permitted to use apparatus.

But, on the whole, school was a dismal place. It was not so much that the hours were long; it was not that he disliked or feared the other boys; but the masters were either intolerably fussy or real brutes. After kindergarten, education was a stern business. He began Latin at nine years of age and French at ten; at eleven Greek was mercilessly added, so that in addition to history, grammar, geography, mathematics, literature, botany, and mineralogy, he was responsible for three foreign languages. The natural sciences were not unmitigated evils, because in the spring the class was taken on excursions into the country to collect specimens. The boys looked forward to lunching at a village inn, and there were songs sung and, during the early hours, all the hilarity of a picnic. But the outings were planned without judgment, the boys marched great distances, and reached home exhausted. Franz suffered

from "growing pains," his legs ached unmercifully, and his mother must rub them with alcohol before he could fall asleep.

He could not have said when he learned to play the piano, but he had no formal lessons until he was ten years old. Then Rafael Joseffy, a sixteen-year-old Hungarian boy, who had studied with Liszt and Tausig, was called in to teach the Damrosch brothers, less for their sakes than to help the destitute young genius. The boys and their little sister could always sing. Not only had they unconsciously learned intervals and correct intonation from their mother; they had a repertory of folk-songs and *Lieder*. Better still, they had imbibed a feeling that music must be sincere and unaffected, a matter of emotion regulated by intellect. It would not be too much to say that they were saturated in music, but there was nothing sentimental in their feeling about it. It was as natural as breathing.

Franz thought highly of his birthday, which came in the time of cherries and roses, but to all of the Damrosches Christmas was the grand climax of the year. The mother must sometimes have remembered how her own radiant mother had stood in the ring of children around the Christmas tree and conducted the singing of *Stille Nacht* and *Ehre sei Gott in der Höhe*. But Dr. Leopold Damrosch took charge of the Christmas music as the Oberamtmann had not done; it was he who played the march when the bell tinkled and the doors flew open and the tree glittered before the children's eyes. Their presents were laid in rows on the settles so that each child could find his own, and though there were boots and coats and knickerbockers among them, books and a few toys were never lacking. Franz spent years in the slow collection of toy soldiers; Christmas was a great help in that project.

One year he made his own special contribution to the surprises of the evening. His father had sent him to the

Golden Goose to pay an opera singer, for he was already ten years old and perfectly reliable. The lady had given him fifty cents of her salary, and Franz scarcely liked to keep for himself what seemed so considerable a sum. He tried to make his father take it, but Dr. Damrosch said it was quite right for him to spend it as he chose. After much deliberation, the boy went secretly to buy a tiny Christmas tree, decorations, and candles. He kept everything in his own room until the very moment when the bell rang to summon the children; then he descended carrying his lighted treasure, bright before a brighter face.

At intervals of a few weeks, the Damrosch family entertained whatever soloist had been engaged for the current concert. Anton Rubinstein was not a guest whose presence afforded Franz much pleasure; he was always wrapped up in his own thoughts, and when he talked, it was to discuss business with Dr. Damrosch.

A boy of Franz's age could not judge Wagner's genius, or indeed the talent of any of their guests; but his father's approval was enough to convince him that Richard Wagner, although a funny-looking gentleman whose pancake cap made him appear like a harsh-featured old lady, was the most wonderful person who ever came to Breslau.

Von Bülow, pianist and conductor at the court of Munich, came at least once a year. Franz admired him because he knew everything without having to look it up in a book; he could tell the very page on which one could find it. He was, however, a very nervous person, and the parents were careful not to let the children disturb him.

Perhaps the reason Franz had a peculiar admiration for Joachim was that, like Dr. Damrosch, he was a violinist. He was a delightful guest who would sit on the sofa cutting out strings of little figures from folded paper. Once when he was expected, Franz wrote his name in flowers on the threshold of the guest room. Joachim, occupied in

showing courtesy to his hostess, stepped over without seeing them, until she told him quickly to look down at his feet.

But to have Carl Tausig come was the signal for real jollity. He was in his twenties and full of jokes. He had been Liszt's favorite pupil and was a marvelous pianist. When he played sonatas with Dr. Damrosch, he would be simply overcome by the wonderful music they had made together. Once when they had finished the *Kreutzer Sonata*, he said soberly, "Damrosch, we did that so grandly that each one of us must just kneel down before the other." So they did. Sometimes Tausig would get angry with Dr. Damrosch, or pretend to be angry; then he would rush outdoors, and by-and-by return calmed. Mother always had a special apple pudding when he came; the children named it for him. Perhaps he was not always dignified, but his jokes were the kind little boys appreciate. Once Dr. Damrosch took him to a rehearsal in the Exchange Hall. The members were, of course, absent, but their names were pasted on their chair backs. Tausig discovered that Mr. Goldstein sat next to Mr. Eckelstein, and he began to talk just like first one and then the other, although he had never seen them. He gesticulated and jabbered and made faces in a way which a boy of nine or ten could not help believing the height of humor.

Little Clara Damrosch was born in December, 1869, and in the following year occurred the third war in Franz's memory—the Franco-Prussian. How could he help believing that war was perfectly splendid? There were extras hawked about the streets, and all the news was of victory. Metz fell, Napoleon III and his army were taken, Paris was besieged. Marie, Walter and Franz picked lint for the wounded, as innocently ignorant of bacteria as were Tante and Mother. For Franz it was more exciting to meet the trains in the Breslau station and give coffee and sandwiches

to the wounded men. He had been studying French in school for about a year and a half, and knew a few phrases which, he believed, entitled him, with some of his enterprising school friends, to act as guides to captured officers on parole who desired to see the sights of Breslau. The chosen route ended at the Belvedere, where the view was certainly fine and where the officer might, if he were so disposed, treat his guide at the restaurant. Soon peace was concluded, the King of Prussia swelled to Emperor of Germany, and all good citizens were expected to be very happy. The householders of Breslau hung their streets with banners and filled their windows with candles which every night illuminated the city.

But the father was more than ever convinced that wars must be paid for; that whatever wealth came through conquest would trickle slowly, if at all, into the treasury of art. When he was grave and silent, his boys thought, as sensitive children will, that the reason was that they had been naughty; he was indeed severe when a bad report came from school, because he realized the importance of a proper preparation for whatever career opened to his sons. But his heaviest burdens were those connected with his profession. Two years earlier he had given Breslau a season of opera which had been a failure for lack of financial support. He had been long enough in Breslau to be certain that he would accomplish nothing beyond his work with chorus and orchestra. He had a wife to support, and his sister-in-law, whose allowance from her father did not suffice to dress her; there were already four children for whom to provide, and he was not far from forty. He looked old; his hair and beard were rapidly growing white. These and many other considerations, trifling in the particular, powerful in the mass, prepared him to make a tremendous decision.

A small matter at last determined the course of the Damrosch evolution; through Mr. Schubert of New York, the music publisher, there was offered to him the post of conductor of the Arion Society, a male chorus of German-Americans. At the same time Liszt recommended him to the leading choral group in Vienna, but the choice fell upon another candidate. The New York offer was the less flattering and suggested those elements of danger which the unknown holds, especially for those burdened as he, but the Arion Society offered to pay his passage and his family's; it is not probable that he could have raised a sufficient sum.

He hesitated briefly; although the Vienna post was filled, another vacancy might occur. Then with the same freedom of action he had shown when, as a boy, he put aside his musical ambition—when in young manhood, he abandoned the field of medicine, he decided to accept the New York offer. Something, indeed, was said about his returning if he disliked conditions in America, but it is probable that he felt his choice irrevocable. He preceded his family, both because he was wanted at once and because he could thus prepare for their coming. Besides, the boys' school term was not finished, and his wife needed time to break up her establishment. He was thirty-eight years and five months old to a day when he sailed, March 22, 1871, on the *Hammonia* from Hamburg.

In the first of the four months which followed, Franz was preyed upon by fears that his father would not like America, and therefore he himself would not be able to take the voyage. Boats had become more interesting than soldiers, and he learned from books how they were rigged and sailed, and many intricate details of their management. But when the first letter came, it was certain that the family were to join the father in New York. He wrote that mem-



bers of the Arion Society had received him with wonderful kindness. He had already begun to drill them for the next concert. There were excellent voices among them.

The children knew that he had read much English literature but only in the German. He was now studying the language, which at his age, was difficult. At home they, too, were trying to learn English. It was comforting for their father to be with the Arion Society since the members were all Germans, but their association was a hindrance to his progress in the language. He wrote that he had played the Beethoven Violin Concerto at a Philharmonic concert; the applause and comments had been impressively favorable. He enclosed a picture; the children, pressed close to their mother, saw a lyre composed of colored flowers with butterflies hovering about. It was convincing proof that America was a land of music and blossoms.

The younger children, except Clara who was only a baby, played steamboat with the dining-room chairs. Franz read *Robinson Crusoe* and was awed by the thought that he was going to the country of Deerslayer and Uncas. The mother and Tante were busy, excited, sorrowful. They planned to sail without a maid or a child's nurse.

On the way to Bremen the party stopped over for a day in Berlin so that Damrosch relatives could see the children. Grandfather von Heimburg came to Bremen to say farewell to his two daughters and four grandchildren. Tante was now a young lady of twenty. She had been asked to stay in Germany as a companion to the Countess Telecki, but her family had been much opposed to the suggestion—not altogether from a sense of von Heimburg importance, but because Tante was too much inclined to subordinate herself. In any case the Damrosches loved her too well to part with her willingly.

She was busy with the baby, Clara, throughout the voy-



age, because Helene was almost constantly seasick. Marie, who was seven years old, played chess with grown men. Occasionally Franz condescended to the youthful enterprise of stealing raisins with Walter by reaching down through the skylight to the table, but for the most part he roamed the ship, explored her workings, lived in a reality so marvelous that he suspected it was a dream. Once only did he suffer from sickness, and that was the fault of his gluttony and not the sea; the ship lay some hours at Southampton and the boys went ashore. There was nothing to buy with the coppers other passengers had given them, but gooseberries from the pushcarts. They brought back enormous bags of them, ate steadily and too long.

The captain of the *Hermann* was on his way to be married, and his happiness made the children's voyage joyous. He appointed Franz officer of the flags and allowed him to signal when the infrequent ships appeared. A poor old woman died in the steerage, and when Franz heard of it, he went at once to lower the flag to half-mast. Before Hoboken was sighted, Helene felt herself well again. One evening she sang on deck, many songs, among them Schubert's *Am Meer*. The steerage folk pressed to their barrier, the passengers of their own class seated themselves on the deck, the sailors climbed into the rigging to listen. The scene was *Tristan* without the love-philter.

On the sultry morning of August 5, 1871, the *Hermann* docked at Hoboken. In spite of all which had occurred, the voyage had not been long; the boat had sailed July 22, just a month after Franz's twelfth birthday. Father, surrounded by friends from the Arion Society, was on the pier to take his family to the beautiful new home he had prepared for them in Thirty-fifth Street.

### CHAPTER III

## THE AMERICANIZATION OF FRANK DAMROSCH (1871-1879)

DURING THE half century before the arrival of Dr. Damrosch and his household, the great musical artists of Europe had flown like birds of passage over the more civilized sections of the United States, but he was the first eminent musician to arrive with the intention of becoming an American. True, there was latent in his heart a wistful desire to return to Europe in old age and finish his spent life in some small German town, but this was nostalgia without purpose: in his conscious mind, he and his sons had come to the United States to be her citizens; their fortunes were henceforth inextricably bound up with New World culture. Every member of the family, except perhaps Tante, was affected by this definite stand which immediately substituted a new and discriminating patriotism for the old, confused and sentimental emotions toward the native land.

The vastness of the American scene prevented Dr. Damrosch from discovering easily, or early, the significance of music in the life of the American people. The Arion Society, which provided his first field of endeavor, was composed of Germans whose background was not dissimilar to that of his audiences in Breslau. There were other German singing societies in America, but all were self-contained; the members gave concerts, but their audiences were of their own race; thus they handed down their culture but could scarcely be said to disseminate it.

Dr. Damrosch did not settle among his countrymen, but rented a house in a ward where the population was over-

whelmingly Irish. His children's Irish schoolmates sang atrociously in their assemblies, but he hesitated to pronounce them congenitally unmusical when he learned that they were not being taught in their classrooms what their mothers should have taught them at home—what every baby in Bohemia or in Germany would have learned in the nursery. He concluded that Irish mothers did not sing to their children, a proposition which he soon extended to: American mothers do not sing to their children. Yet it was apparent that music was largely in the hands of women. Their patronage made concerts possible. Although they did not play themselves in orchestras and were infrequently members of singing societies, they made their own excursions into art. In girlhood they "took lessons" upon reed organ or piano for the least musical reasons: they expected the acquisition of a little string of sentimental pieces interspersed with bouncing marches and polkas to make them important and popular in the society which they graced. They gave up music when they took on matrimony; it meant no more to them than a summer dress worn through a season and, when the weather changed, laid aside as inappropriate. A sour jest illustrated the prevailing attitude toward such an accomplishment: the fashionable daughter played the piano in the parlor, while her virtuous and perspiring mother baked pies in the kitchen. The lack of sympathy such jokes illustrated was enough to take the heart out of a girl's practicing. How different it was in his own home where his wife, Tante, little Marie, even baby Clara always had music on their lips!

A small proportion of Americans went to concerts. Did the excellent music furnished by visiting artists have a permanent influence on those who listened to it? He had heard in Europe of the grotesque antics occasioned by Jenny Lind's tour and of absurdities equaling Jullien's *Fireman's Quadrille*. The drama, the glamor diffused by famous

personalities, the great name—provided one could pronounce it—these captivated the avid imagination of a practical people. But the tones of music entered the ear, died away, and were forgotten.

Two years before Leopold Damrosch came to America, Theodore Thomas had organized the men of his orchestra on a permanent basis and, under the necessity of providing them with uninterrupted employment, commenced the Thomas tours. At that time the New York Philharmonic was giving five subscription concerts a year; the members elected the leader and divided the proceeds, which in their most successful season netted each man less than \$150, an amount too trifling to insure the attendance of the musicians at concerts, for they felt themselves obliged to accept more lucrative or longer engagements whenever such offered. A member who could not go himself to a Philharmonic concert would endeavor to provide a substitute, and the orchestra was lucky if the newcomer proved not entirely inadequate.

Several survivors of the Germania Orchestra, that band of twenty-four which had been the first to tour America, had settled in diverse parts of the country and were doing notable work. Carl Zerrahn, as conductor of the Handel and Haydn Society, influenced Boston's musical development for forty years. Carl Bergmann, the Germania concertmaster, was a conductor of the New York Philharmonic from 1855 to 1876. To his persistence was due the ultimate lethargy of audiences under assaults of Wagner and Liszt; they might not enjoy them, but he had battered down their resistance. Hans Balatka had done all for Chicago's musical culture that the Chicagoans would as yet countenance.

American audiences had listened apathetically to William Mason's piano recitals, but watched with expectant joy the stage manners of Louis Gottschalk; chamber music without eccentricity was all but universally abhorred, and

it would be long before audiences of respectable size found it endurable.

Lowell Mason had achieved great things in the school music of Boston: his first convention in 1834 had been attended by twelve music teachers; fifteen years later, one thousand flocked to it. Oberlin, the first college to furnish instruction in music, had done so since 1835. The Oberlin Conservatory became a department of the college in 1867, a year memorable also for the founding of the Chicago Musical College, the Cincinnati and the New England conservatories. The Peabody in Baltimore followed close upon these four music schools.

As for the opera world, when Dr. Damrosch settled in New York, the Academy of Music was all-important. There the performances of Italian opera were excellent; such singers as Patti appeared for fabulous sums, and society paid prodigious prices to see if not to hear them. None of this concerned any but the wealthy, and in a musical sense it meant deplorably little to them.

Dr. Damrosch was surprised and at first delighted, not only with the excellence of such groups as the Arion and Liederkranz, but with the orchestra of Theodore Thomas, of which he wrote back to Breslau that he had never heard a finer in Europe. But the possession of such an orchestra did nothing to prove Americans an innately musical people, because the personnel was largely German.

Theodore Thomas was himself a German, born three years earlier than Leopold Damrosch, whose slender elegance contrasted sharply with his portly and commanding presence. They were rivals, unluckily for them and for the peace of the Damrosch family. Dr. Damrosch did not believe that antagonism was inherent in their situation, since New York was a great city and Thomas's sphere of activity often carried him beyond it. But Dr. Damrosch was a highly cultivated gentleman whose schooling had been

formal and whose view of the musical world was of European breadth. Theodore Thomas, an excellent and even idealistic musician, had had no education except what he had been able to gain from a rough world and the unfolding of his own ardent mind. His father had been Town Musician in a little German city, a post similar to that which Weber's father held at the nadir of his fortunes. When he was ten years old, the boy had been brought to America, and from that time on had supported himself by playing the fiddle, often in appalling circumstances.

The formidable character which emerged from his terrific struggles was limited by that nearsightedness which hems in the self-made man. He was inordinately sensitive, and held the printed word in awed respect, to the point where an adverse newspaper criticism could keep him awake all night. In his manner he was uncultivated, and his speech was sometimes coarse and brutal. Thomas and Damrosch were both excellent violinists, superb conductors, musicians with broad and noble purpose; yet they could not possibly understand each other. Damrosch read widely, and Thomas read little but Shakespeare; Damrosch was a gifted speaker, Thomas was blunt; Damrosch had a supple mind; Thomas an obstinate. A trifling incident showed how irreconcilable were the dispositions of these two men: after a concert, Dr. Damrosch remarked to Thomas on the moving beauty of the music just played, and Thomas rebuffed him by saying that he wished he could get a whisky; doubtless the oratorio had stirred him as deeply, but he could not be courteous to a man he disliked, whom he suspected of affectation and of asserting a superior attitude.

In the Damrosch family, the mother and Tante were outspoken partisans and the children naturally sympathized with their father: Mr. Thomas was an ogre. Franz was like his father, gentle, fastidious, and reserved. Antago-

nism worried him. If New York were too little to hold two great musical personalities, was not America sufficiently vast to support innumerable musicians? He heard that the country was full of crude, untaught people who had never had an opportunity of learning to sing or to play an instrument. Gradually several ideas came to maturity in the boy's mind: no one could be pre-eminent without being envied, perhaps hated, and quarreling was unpleasant, although it was everyone's duty to stand by his relations: if it was not possible to work with certain people, one could perhaps go away and work elsewhere. Long before he traveled in the United States, he had a sense of her great distances. He had crossed the broad Atlantic, and before him to the west stretched spaces as illimitable.

That first home in America, the house on Thirty-fifth Street, had such a welcome for the Damrosch family that the children could not be homesick. They had always lived in flats and played communal games in courtyards, and now they had a lawn and garden of their own, their own flowers and rosebushes, and a three-story brick house all to themselves. The kitchen and dining room were in the basement, from which one could run out upon the grass; above were the parlor and the sitting room, where the floors were covered with carpets in stylish large patterns; the furniture was Victorian of the debased period; all was comfortable, substantial, and in fashion. In one matter the Damrosches could feel themselves superior to kings and queens in Europe, for they possessed two bathrooms. As yet no servant had been engaged, but a comfortable Irish-woman came in by the day. From her, Frank learned his first American song: *Shoo, Fly, Don't Bother Me*—and supposed it was incomprehensible only because he knew so little English. When his mother had secured her two permanent servants, Dr. Damrosch estimated their wages



and the upkeep of the house at \$1,400; but, as he said, one thought less of spending a dollar in New York than a penny in Breslau.

There was a month left of vacation between the docking of the *Hermann* and the opening of school. That passed, and in early September, the father escorted Walter and Frank to Number 40 on East Twenty-third Street, where with courteous simplicity he explained to the woman principal that the boys knew no English, although in the Gymnasium in their old home they had advanced as far as other boys of their age; he trusted her judgment in placing them where they should be.

She put them both in the first grade, but discreetly separated them, so that they sat in different classrooms. Within three days she began a system of rapid promotions. Frank had risen to Grammar School in the February term of 1872, and at the end of his first year in America was taking part upon the stage in the final exercises. The brief period of probation in the primary had seemed very long. A boy of twelve, who felt he knew a good deal of Greek, Latin, and French, did not enjoy sitting with the babies. But his teachers liked him and sympathized with his position, and before long he became really important, for they found out that he could play the piano and practiced everyday; yes, certainly, he said, he could play for the children to march, and he could play the songs for assembly.

His sense of sound made spelling easy, and in those days great stress was laid upon spelling, with matches and "choosing sides" on Friday afternoons. Frank Damrosch could spell down anyone. Very soon he had a wide vocabulary. At first his superior size made the idea of fighting his schoolmates preposterous, but when he was promoted into a class where he was rather smaller than the average, he had few battles with the Irish lads who populated Number 40 and fought perpetually among themselves. They liked



Frank, though they were puzzled by him. In the spring Dr. Damrosch wrote to a friend in Breslau, "Franz's conversation and charm are already greatly admired by the Americans."

Although the boy had friendly relations with all his schoolfellows, he was on intimate terms with only one. He met Otto Eidlitz on a day when he had been stoically enduring the humiliation of sitting among the six-year-olds. A voice hailed him in German; Frank had not heard a word of that dear language outside his own home since landing in New York. The boy, whose name was Otto Eidlitz, was a year Frank's junior and had recently missed many months of school because of being knocked down by a streetcar. He pulled down his long stocking to show his honorable scar. Frank realized that this nice boy wanted very much to be friends; Otto said temptingly that he had ever so many toys to play with because he had been sick so long, and mentioned especially his tin soldiers. Frank had left his once treasured collection in Breslau, and now his heart yearned over them. He went home with Otto.

The family was one of which the exclusive Mrs. Damrosch could wholeheartedly approve. The father, Marc Eidlitz, had come from Bohemia, not as an exile or an adventurer in the usual sense, for he was a well-educated young man of distinguished antecedents. Otto's mother was an accomplished pianist, daughter of the court physician in Prague. The Eidlitzes had several children, were well-to-do and hospitable, and delighted with Otto's new friend.

Everyday after school the two boys would scurry over to Otto's house, behind which stretched a storage yard where they played Indian games and could be as wild as if they lived in the wilderness. Frank was always invited to stay to supper, and Otto was as welcome in the Damrosch home.

In the middle of May, 1872, a month before Frank's birthday, little Elizabeth was born, the last of the Damrosch children; and when school was out, the mother and Tante were not sorry to have Frank and Walter away for a fortnight in the country. A violin pupil of Dr. Damrosch had invited the boys to visit at a house on the summit of a hill with a far view of forests and lakes. Round Pond lay within the domain, woods fringed its margins, and at nightfall the deer pattered down to drink the cool water. No one troubled Frank with hints of bedtime. After supper he would go alone to the lake and fish from a rowboat, taking no account of time, staying often until almost midnight. He was perfectly happy in his solitude. One night a brightness in the sky aroused him from a reverie; it grew to brilliance and the heavens seemed to be aflame. He did not know it was the Aurora Borealis, and yet the sight did not terrify, although it awed him.

After that summer, his holidays were spent with Otto. The Eidlitzes had a summer cottage at Dobbs Ferry looking down upon the Hudson. The boys swam and boated, and in the evening, when it was cool above the river, played games or sang before the fireplace in the living room. Otto took violin lessons, but intended to follow his grandfather's example and be a surgeon. An older brother was in Cornell and, when he graduated, would go into business with his father. Life seemed neatly plotted out for Otto. Unenvious Frank felt that his friend would be wealthy and successful.

His own holidays shone the brighter because they were few in number. He was usually practicing. Walter and he took piano lessons from Dionys Pruckner, who had taught at the Stuttgart Conservatory; but after a short time, they changed teachers in favor of Ferdinand von Inten, who seems to have possessed only local importance. It was unfortunate that both the boys were especially inter-

ested in the piano, because Frank, who was very proud of his younger brother's brilliance, was inclined to compare performances and underrate his own.

In the spring of 1873 the pianist Rubinstein and the violinist Wieniawski joined the orchestra of Theodore Thomas as soloists for the concluding fortnight of the tour and returned with it to New York for the April festival in Steinway Hall. Rubinstein, an old family friend, dining with the Damrosches in Stuyvesant Square, found Leopold baffled and depressed. Although the virtuoso was of a nature not ordinarily sympathetic to him, Dr. Damrosch took advantage of the opportunity of unburdening himself to a man from home. He wished if possible to get some practical advice.

The worst of his troubles was the hostility of Thomas; he told Rubinstein of meeting that formidable personage in Schubert's music store when Thomas, towering above him in the narrow space, had said with frightful energy, "I hear, Dr. Damrosch, that you are a very fine musician, but I want to tell you one thing, whoever crosses my path, I crush." Thomas was popular with the mass of concert-goers; Damrosch was afraid that the wealthy patrons who preferred him did so because of his good manners rather than his ability. He regretted time wasted by tea parties. His field was narrow; he had only the Arion Society, private pupils, occasional engagements as a violin soloist; as yet he had not had a chance to show New York what he was capable of doing. Rubinstein would know how indefatigably he worked in his contracted sphere; he took breakfast early, practiced several hours on his violin, wrote business letters interminably, taught violin and composition, coached professionals—he had one delightful fellow whom he assisted with the flute, a Southern gentleman named Sidney Lanier who was also a poet. Money was no longer one of the main problems—sometimes he got \$100 for solo

work—but “the way I often feel these days, is that I have given up a simple, soul-stimulating, inner life for a somewhat empty, superficial existence.”

Rubinstein pondered the problem and suggested that Dr. Damrosch organize an oratorio society. This would not place him in Thomas’s dreadful “path” but would serve to complement the work of the Arion and Liederkranz. Investigation proved that the Sacred Music Society had dissolved twenty-five years before and been replaced by the New York Harmonic Society, which continued to function but feebly; there had been also a Mendelssohn Society—not to be confounded with the Mendelssohn Glee Club—which had ceased to exist in 1872. The Church Music Association, which had entered upon a career in 1869, seemed about to give up its faint-hearted life; thus Dr. Leopold Damrosch’s venture would fill the most evident need in New York musical life.

In 1873 Dr. Damrosch invited a group of musical friends to his house; with his wife and sister-in-law, the company numbered eighteen; these were the nucleus of the Oratorio Society. The membership increased, and since the Chapel of Trinity, where the first rehearsals were held, was too cramping for the forty singers of the second season, they moved to the Y.M.C.A. Building on Twenty-third Street. The president was Dr. John Cooke, an Episcopalian clergyman, and among the founders were the Gustav Schirmers of the music dealer’s family. The first program of the young society, on December 3, 1873, featured choruses by Bach, Mozart, Händel, Mendelssohn, and Palestrina, the last of which was sung *a cappella*. The boys’ teacher, von Inten, played with Leopold Damrosch in a Beethoven trio, and Dr. Damrosch played a Chopin nocturne as a violin solo. The chief feature of the second concert was Händel’s *Samson*.

In 1874 young Frank graduated from grammar school

and was admitted to the introductory class of the College of the City of New York, where, by the unfamiliar name of Francis Henry Damrosch, he was enrolled as a pupil of the collegiate course, which was distinct from the commercial. City College, originally known as the Free Academy, had been founded as an institution intended to combine high school and college for exceptionally promising sons of New York residents. Tuition and textbooks were free, roll-call was at 8:45, attendance throughout the day was compulsory; it was understood that the boys were to make the most of their opportunities. Of the faculty, fifteen members held higher degrees, an indication of their superior attainments. Frank left the College at the close of his sophomore year with what used to be called "a gentleman's education," having satisfied the requirements in Virgil, Cicero, and Livy, modern history, geometry, rhetoric, moral science, Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, oratory, composition, and drawing both from life and from the antique.

The summer Otto's elder brother died, the Eidlitz family felt unable to spend the holidays at Dobbs Ferry, where they had all been happy together. Plans must be changed not only for that season but for the whole course of life. Otto decided not to study medicine, but to take his brother's place in the business and be a mainstay to his father. The Eidlitzes vacationed in a hotel at Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey, and there Frank joined the family.

Youth is not long overwhelmed by sorrow. The moment his friend stepped off the boat, Otto announced that the first thing next morning, he would introduce him to his girl, who was staying with her family in the same hotel. The following day when they went surf-bathing, he brought up a pretty little thing with curling brown hair, and said with extreme politeness, "Frank, I want you to meet Hetty Mosenthal." They stood, all three, in the water, and Hetty

was shaking hands with Frank in the punctilious fashion of the 1870's when a great wave swooped down and tumbled them over on the sand.

The summer of 1876 was important to Frank not only because he first met Hetty then; it was a period of intense preoccupation with music. He had passed a placid freshman year, doing the required work without difficulty, putting most emphasis upon his hours of piano practice, and attending the very complete series of piano recitals which Hans von Bülow gave in the season of 1875-76 and in the following winter.

Chickering Brothers had built a fine new hall and engaged von Bülow for his advertisement value. Since the unfortunate death of Frank's old friend Tausig, von Bülow was unrivaled among intellectual musicians; his style and his conception, especially of Beethoven, whose piano sonatas he played that season in their entirety, possessed the qualities Frank found most grateful to his needs. As a little boy in Breslau, he had thought von Bülow rather a cross gentleman who did not care to be pestered with children, and in spite of devotion to his father, sometimes wrote disagreeable things of him in letters. Now that Frank was a young man, he was able to appreciate the nobility which marked von Bülow both as a human being and as an artist. There was grandeur in the way such a man subordinated himself in order to play exactly as the composer had intended his music to be played. The emotional Rubinstein could never have roused Frank's admiration to such a pitch. He had not heard his godfather Liszt, but he knew there were critics who believed that von Bülow surpassed him in his conception of the pianoforte; under his small, strong hands the instrument became an orchestra.

In Frank's case that first season of piano recitals resulted in a musical saturation in which emotion and intellect were nicely balanced. Hard upon it came the opportunity

for his father to go to Bayreuth to the first Wagner festival, which was also not without effect upon the boy's generous and sympathetic nature. There were fluctuations of depression and hope as to whether or not Dr. Damrosch could afford to go. At first it seemed impossible; just as he had missed *Tristan* in Munich because of poverty, so he seemed fated to miss the *Nibelungen Ring* at Bayreuth; this would be a shrewd blow to his prestige as the president of the Wagner-Verein. Then Mr. Schirmer of the music store, his good friend, insisted on lending him \$500; and when the family had decided he would be wise to assume the debt, Charles A. Dana offered him \$500 more for a series of articles from Bayreuth to be published in the *New York Sun*. Thus the loan was repaid as soon as it was incurred, and in the Damrosch home there was rejoicing.

The boys seem never to have considered that they ought to be allowed to go along; day after day, with the mother and Tante and the little sisters, they gathered contentedly around the piano while the father, who had cut short his dinner for the privilege, played the scores and explained the meaning of the *Ring*. He did not sail until June. The weeks which intervened between Dana's offer and his departure had a tremendous effect on Frank's musical education; all winter he had been hearing the noblest music for the piano and now he was learning how voice, action, and orchestra comprised with subtle balance the German opera. During his father's absence he practiced eight hours a day and, half-intending to become a virtuoso, began to build a repertory. His father's articles in the *Sun* moved him to the depths of his being. He had been long enough away from Germany to feel a romantic love for her, and, while he read, Wotan, Brunhilde, and Siegmund seemed actually to exist yonder in Bayreuth, rather than to be represented there upon a stage.



The first article, which occupied an entire page of the *Sunday Sun*, had probably been written before Dr. Damrosch left New York. It gave an admirable account of the story of the *Nibelungen Ring*, and although based, as he said, upon a recent prize essay, was in essentials the work of Damrosch. The language was that of an educated foreigner—an occasional strangeness of idiom, an odd use of a preposition betrayed him, but the vocabulary marked the cultivated man and the prevailing enthusiasm and sincerity were delightful. Later articles told how he had arrived in Bayreuth on August 1 in time to eat his dinner with various daughters of Wotan. Liszt was there, “more imposing than ever, and as indescribably delicate.” Among the women singers, Madame Friedrich-Materna of Vienna was transcendent; the youthful Lehmann sisters were surpassingly beautiful as Rhine Maidens; every notable musician in the world seemed to have come to Bayreuth, all old friends, and many men who had risen to prominence in his five years’ absence from Europe. As an American citizen, he was gratified to see so many of his adopted countrymen in the audiences. Wagner himself, although harassed and continually surrounded, was, for Wagner, in fair humor.

Frank studied the articles and enriched them, not only with memories of his father’s mobile face and persuasive voice, but with his own fervid imagination. He was immersed in music; why should he not give his life to it?

The father returned; college resumed. That year Frank won the prize in Latin prose composition; he belonged to the Decemvirate, a society of ten who held themselves the brightest and the best; he helped to edit the short-lived paper which they neatly named *The Meteor*. Outside of class, he went to concerts and practiced.

It was natural to believe that with the prestige of his visit to Bayreuth and the articles he had published, Dr.



Damrosch would henceforth find his way smooth before him, and the family was the more distressed when in the autumn of his return he met disaster in the field where he believed himself most able. The Philharmonic Society, in its customary election, had chosen him to conduct during the season of 1876-77. The four last seasons of the orchestra had been successful, because Thomas's absence with his own orchestra had left the New York field to the Philharmonic. Thomas had then been offered the post at the Philharmonic, but refused to take it, because the members had added a rider to the effect that he must give up his own series of New York concerts; the popularity of the Philharmonic concerts was considered insufficient to rival Thomas's private ventures. In an evil hour Dr. Damrosch accepted the post left vacant by Thomas's refusal. The total receipts of the five concerts of that season averaged only \$168. At a sixth, he played the Beethoven concerto with which he had won applause with the Philharmonic in 1871, but any fresh admiration his virtuosity excited failed to add materially to the exchequer.

Von Bülow was again giving a series of recitals, and through him, Frank was learning to love the music of Brahms. But Brahms, all-innocent, caused another vexatious episode in the Thomas-Damrosch feud. Hearing that the long-awaited First Symphony was published, Dr. Damrosch hurried to his friend Schirmer's music store to buy the score, but was denied it; the only copy had been promised to Thomas. Nevertheless, it was Damrosch who gave the initial New York performance of the great C Minor Symphony. Strange tales were abroad; there were those who said Schirmer had covertly obliged his friend and thus cheated both the composer and Thomas. A romantic theory was promulgated concerning a woman of extraordinary beauty who had come in secret to Schirmer and implored him to lend her the score for one night only; she had has-

tened with it to Dr. Damrosch, who had copyists in readiness; until dawn lights blazed in the Damrosch home. The facts were not so extraordinary. The beauty of the woman in the case, although actual, had little to do with the event. She was an amateur musician who studied composition with Dr. Damrosch. Since she was wealthy, she had a standing order with Simrock, the Leipzig publisher, to send her everything of interest. When her copy came in the mail, doubtless by the same boat which brought the score to Schirmer, she gave it to her teacher. Walter never forgot opening the front door for the lady with the splendid gift.

This simple explanation was not one which Thomas would credit. His dislike of Damrosch increased; his later unwillingness to be called Dr. Thomas, after honorary degrees had been bestowed upon him, may have been founded in his contempt for Damrosch's title of "doctor." His supersensitivity caused him to suffer even when he triumphed; at the close of Damrosch's wretched 1876-77 season, the Philharmonic offered Thomas the post of conductor with no restrictive clause and he accepted; but, although so plainly a victor, he was pained by subsequent rumors to the effect that the Philharmonic had elected him only because the orchestra could not exist if he persisted in rivaling it with one of his own.

The following year Thomas left the Philharmonic and went to Cincinnati as director of a new College of Music. Dr. Damrosch, attempting to regain the post which Thomas was vacating, was defeated by Adolph Neuendorff, who had a reputation as a composer but not as a director. The only alternatives now remaining to Dr. Damrosch were, either to confine himself to the Arion and Oratorio societies and lesser activities, or boldly to organize a symphony orchestra to compete with the Philharmonic. He decided on the latter course and in 1878 created the New York



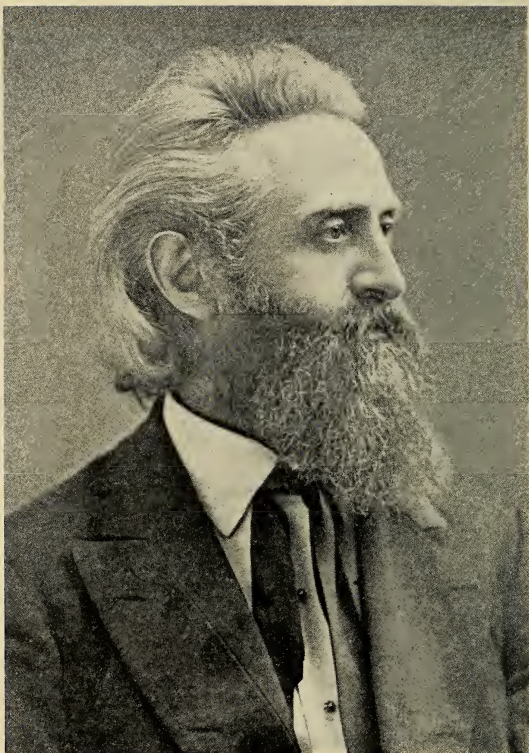
HELENE DAMROSCH AND HER  
SONS, FRANK AND WALTER



FRANK AND WALTER  
IN BRESLAU



THE DAMROSCH FAMILY IN BRESLAU  
FRANK, "TANTE," HELENE, MARIE, LEOPOLD, WALTER



LEOPOLD DAMROSCH



HELENE VON HEIMBURG DAMROSCH



FRANK DAMROSCH  
IN DENVER



Symphony Society, destined to many years of fruitful existence. Unfortunately for him, Thomas, justly dissatisfied with the situation in Cincinnati, returned to the Philharmonic after Neuendorff's single year as its conductor. In succeeding seasons, between the efforts of Thomas and of Damrosch, concertgoers became acquainted with the bulk of orchestral literature, although since both men were stout Wagnerians, the Bayreuth influence tended to overbalance the programs. The competition of the orchestras unquestionably raised musical standards, but the petty warfare had a detrimental effect on the nerves of the principals and kept the Damrosch family in a state of turmoil.

Frank disliked the feud, which had many unpleasant implications; if his father, who was, as everyone admitted, a truly great musician, had to struggle ceaselessly to hold his own and to advance a little now and then, what chance would his son have when he left college to begin a career in music? If New York were not big enough to hold Thomas and Damrosch, would it ever stretch sufficiently for Walter and himself to crowd in upon the profession? Could he conceivably stand as Walter's rival? In his heart Frank deplored the bitterness engendered by the feud. One paper called his father a Germanized Hebrew, which sounded as if he were a monstrous hybrid. Another consideration was the fear of poverty not uncommon in a serious, responsible boy. He worried about his father; the frail, white-bearded man with floating locks looked portentously aged to a boy in his teens; old people died; who then would take care of the mother, Tante, the three little girls? One of the sons must help the father with his work and carry out his mission, and for that labor Walter was divinely appointed. Already he was playing the piano for the rehearsals of the Oratorio Society, and people said that he knew as if by instinct what his father wanted without so much as a glance exchanged between them: Walter was

brilliant and beautiful and could endure the public gaze. Frank discovered in himself no desire to occupy the center of a barren stage while he played a piano to a vast audience. He knew he could be a virtuoso, but did not think he would enjoy it. The quiet, well-bred boy was conscious of discontent, of a little real suffering. He did not know what to do with his life. He loved music, and he had not learned that there are many ways of serving art. At his age, his father had staged the Great Rebellion; but Frank was practical, with a sense of humor, and knew that no unjust powers opposed him; everyone in the family loved and approved of him, and he loved them all.

Nevertheless, at the end of his sophomore year, when he was losing Otto to Cornell, Frank took the radical step of leaving college, with the intention of finding some kind of work with which he would be able eventually to support the family, should that turn out to be necessary. This in itself was no great renunciation, since he was weary of inaction and of the monotony of school life.

Theodore Steinway, dining with the Damrosches, suggested that the elder son of his host learn all about pianos with a view to entering the House of Steinway. Frank was clever with tools, and the idea was attractive because it was connected with the mechanics of music. Mr. Steinway arranged to have him taken on as apprentice to a cabinetmaker.

But the working day was ten hours long, the noon recess far too brief to allow an hour's walk home and hour's walk back again for a hot meal. He must rise at half past five and, after the day's labor, go to bed the moment he had bolted his evening dinner. There was no possibility of practicing the piano except on Sunday. During this apprenticeship, the Damrosches all suffered; and after enduring it for a few weeks, the father gave one of his in-



frequent commands, and Frank abandoned the cabinet-maker.

His next sally was directly into the business world, where he was to learn how little use his education was in the mere making of money; he became an office boy earning a pittance of \$2.50 a week. That office boy in a jobbing house needed good feet; Frank walked four or five times a day to the post office a mile away, and there were longer excursions, pleasant but fatiguing, to the wharves where the ships came in laden with syrups and teas for his employer. His salary was raised; soon his pay was four dollars a week, and he proposed to contribute to family support. His mother's refusal, sensible and kind as it was, discouraged him. For a young man nearing twenty, he felt himself on the brink of failure.

Early in June, 1879, a New York businessman, whose interest in music made a bond between him and the Damrosches, dined with them on his return from a Western trip. He was enthusiastic about Colorado, where silver had been discovered the year before.

The pictures he conjured up enchanted Frank, romantic enough under his quiet exterior. The Indians of whom he had read in Breslau had moved westward, and the West meant freedom; much as he loved all at home, he desired heartily to be free.

When he was twelve years old, the great migration had cut off his childhood, placing a barrier, behind which it remained in the Old World. But he had then been one of the clan, scarcely an individual. When had he been most conscious of himself since those half-forgotten days? When he had been alone, free, independent of the family, as in the boat in the dark night at Round Pond, or rowing up the river to see Otto. What did he know of the country beyond New York? He had become a typical New Yorker, familiar only with the city and its fringe of land and sea.

For a few days he thought in silence on his needs, and then at breakfast announced quietly that he was going to Denver, where, if he could not make a fortune, he would at least be self-supporting.

His mother, who could ill endure the prospect of her children scattering, protested strongly; but the father calmed her. In his time he, too, had rebelled against the domination of the home, and he knew that a young man ought to be free to accept his inescapable destiny. He sympathized with his son, who was like him; and yet even in youth was capable of greater altruism. Aware that his musicians dubbed him "Schoolmaster," knowing that he honestly enjoyed educating others, the father recognized the truth, that in his own case, his genius and his music must be first served. People were his tools by which music could be developed; they were instrumentalists and listeners, and it was primarily for the sake of art, and then for themselves, that he desired to teach them. Frank, loving music deeply, cared more for people; it was Frank who might yet deserve that title of the pure altruist—Schoolmaster. Dr. Damrosch merely remarked that his son would be very sensible to try Denver for a year.

The boy's twentieth birthday was at hand, hallowed because it would set a period to his dependence. He had never had a birthday ungraced by roses and cherries, and wondered, perhaps, if he would find them in Denver. He asked his mother to invite his boy friends to dinner, and that hospitable woman not only assented cheerfully but sent out private invitations to an equal number of girls. The Damrosches were living then on East Forty-ninth Street.

When the boys had dined, in came a troupe of girls in their elaborate summer dresses, singing, "We are his sisters and his cousins and his aunts"—for *Pinafore* was in the very air. Dr. Damrosch caught up his violin and, playing

as he went, preceded them like the Pied Piper, up two flights into a large room decorated, German style, with flowers and garlands. There they found sandwiches and cakes and the Damrosches' celebrated "Maitrank," in which herbs gave flavor to white wine. It was hot, but they danced until they were exhausted. Then they ran down again to the parlor, where Dr. Damrosch drew character sketches, not with pencil but by musical improvisation on the piano. That of little Hetty Mosenthal, her brown hair as curly as ever, though she brushed it with due severity, her eyes as blue as when Frank had met her three years before, was so characteristic that everyone cried, "That's Hetty! That's Hetty!" Then Dr. Damrosch gave up the piano to Walter, because he said Walter knew the other girls better. His substitute was particularly amusing about a student of kindergarten methods who could talk nothing but shop; he played a trite motive in the middle register, left it to improvise all over the keyboard, but inevitably returned to the dull refrain.

The party was over, the older son going out from the home with the twenty-five dollars he had saved. The father urged him to accept three hundred dollars, and when the boy refused, insisted on his taking one hundred—little enough for an expensive trip with no secure employment at its end. Frank accepted a sheaf of letters of introduction, which in his new-found independence he determined not to use. His father went to the Pennsylvania Station to see him off. His words of counsel were few; whatever battles his boy must fight, he could be trusted to remain constant, unselfish, kind. But the father went home sad enough. Brilliant and affectionate as Walter was, devoted as were his girls, Leopold Damrosch knew he was parting from the one whose nature was most nearly akin to his own.

#### CHAPTER IV

### A YOUNG MAN DISCOVERS HIS DESTINY (1879-1885)

ON BOTH SIDES the parting was sad, but it is always easier for the one who sets forth upon a journey than for him who sits at home. It was the breaking-up of the family; to the elder generation no separation this side of death appears more final. The parents knew that Frank on his return would be as loving and sincere, but he would never again feel that the satisfaction of all his needs lay in their providence. The distance he was to travel seemed very great; four days and five nights marked the severance, and who could know what might happen to their son before one of the family could reach Denver?

But the boy himself soon regained his quiet cheerfulness as the scenery and his companions began to interest him. Long before the train neared Denver, he saw antelopes, prairie dogs, cowboys, and Indians—everything which his reading of the West had promised.

Frank had expected to find a temporary lodging in one of the smaller hotels, but when with charming candor he confided his plans to the proprietor and mentioned his capital of forty dollars, that good fellow recommended a reputable boardinghouse where Frank immediately settled himself for the sum of seven dollars a week. The Damrosches, although chronically feeling poor, lived in a comparatively large way with ample space. Ever since the Breslau days when the boys had been separated for fighting, Frank had been accustomed to a room of his own, but at the boardinghouse he must share a young Canadian's double bed. He accepted the arrangement serenely as one of the

expected hardships of frontier life—he had not had time to learn that Denver did not consider herself an outpost.

He soon discovered, however, that new arrivals in this city where he hoped to make his way were supposed to take no notice of the “frontier” side of existence, but to exclaim at Denver’s rapid growth, the great number of churches, the two telephone systems, the Tabor Block which, when it was finished, would be the finest building west of Chicago, the first structure of more than three stories between Chicago and California! He who desired to please might remark that in all but population the twenty-one-year-old city of forty thousand was superior to New York; he must listen sympathetically to such boasts as the flat assertion that your true Denverite was equally at home in Paris—although of course preferring Denver.

He expected to find work at once. The city was full of transients who passed through Denver on their way to the newly discovered silver mines of Leadville. They and the bustle they created made the population seem larger than it was, but only hotels and stores benefited from their transit. If Frank had been willing to become a day laborer, had he known any one of the building trades, he could have found employment on the day of his arrival; the streets were blocked by construction materials. But the city of boasted opportunity had apparently no need of a young man with a liberal education, no professional training—unless one counted music—excellent manners, and unimpeachable character.

Determined not to write home for money, unwilling to lose his sense of self-sufficiency by presenting his letters of introduction, he saw his forty dollars dwindle to three. A fit of illness disheartened and alarmed him. July waned, and the time arrived when he must mention to his landlady his approaching departure; he did not know where to go, but in his opinion it was impossible to stay when he

could no longer pay his board. The confessed impecuniosity of the well-dressed young man from the East surprised the good woman, but she merely suggested that he consult her "star boarder," the owner of a Wyoming ranch. On Sunday Frank had an interview with "the Colonel," as everyone called him, and was offered a job: on Tuesday the Colonel was going to his ranch, and if Frank found nothing better in the meantime, he would take him along, give him five ponies, board and a bunk, and a dollar a day. But, said the Colonel, it was rough work, not suited to a young gentleman who had been to college.

On Monday Frank did find other employment, although it was no more suitable for a young gentleman than ranching, and was much less romantic. He became a hatter's clerk at \$35 a month. Had he stayed in New York, his financial condition would have been sounder; here in the hat shop he would be obliged to pay his landlady \$31.50 plus some trifle to the Chinaman for washing his linen. The simple instructions given him by the proprietor had the merit of novelty and stuck in his memory: Chinamen's hats were kept in a special box and sold to them at one dollar apiece; gamblers received unlimited credit; clergymen, of whom there were many, were not to be "trusted" and must pay cash for every purchase. He had been warned that the job was at best temporary; the reason for hiring him was the absence of a partner who had gone East on a buying trip. Yet with all its disadvantages he was delighted to have his days filled, after the dreary void of July. Morning after morning through that August of 1879 he was at the shop by seven o'clock to clean, dust, sweep the sidewalk, and brush up his stock of hats.

His month's employment netted him exactly one dollar, which he determined to spend riotously. The railroad advertised a one-dollar Sunday excursion to Boulder, and he had met people who lived there—in this country everyone

welcomed guests—and a change might do him good. Although he tried to express himself cheerfully in the weekly letter to his mother, he had to admit to himself that he was low spirited; he dreaded the return of the hatter who would turn his wretched substitute out of his shop and arrange his natty autumn styles on the shelves Frank had assiduously dusted. The day's outing which the young man bought with his last dollar was so happy that he remembered it all his life; the family was kind, the home dinner tasted wonderful. Afterward, the daughters of the house, who were the ages of his sister Marie and pretty Hetty Mosenthal, took him on a long walk up the canyon, which cleared away the remnants of his depression.

With fresh courage he renewed his search for work. But looking for a job in Denver was peculiarly trying because, when one learned to discount the transients going through to Leadville, the city was really small and everyone who looked at him knew that he was an Easterner. He could not, of course, mention to Denverites that he thought their town less a metropolis than New York, but at home it was certainly not so embarrassing to hunt employment. His next place paid him a little more—ten dollars a week—but he lost it when his predecessor, dissatisfied with his new position, returned to claim his former place. Frank took his leavings a second time. The man had been working in his brief absence for a liquor business which, if he had stuck out the month, would have paid him sixty dollars. Frank did not think he would enjoy a trade in liquor, but it was not a retail establishment; it was an affair of barrels, not of glasses, and the European Damrosches had not the horror of drink which had begun to characterize many Americans.

Nevertheless, he disliked his work with the wholesale dealers in liquor. Nor could he escape a growing suspicion that, had he stayed in New York and become a pro-



fessional musician, he would have been as well off financially and far more congenially occupied. He began to feel that success, even in its coarsest sense, may be easier to attain when a man follows his natural bent. He had not realized what life would be with so little music. On Sundays he played the old-fashioned square piano in the boardinghouse parlor; it was his only leisure and his only recreation, but the results were unsatisfactory, partly because the performance was solitary; music ought to be made by people singing and playing in harmony. He would like to hear the Oratorio Society sing again.

Certainly his new life was not wholly distasteful. He was making friends, the camaraderie of the West was charming, and the citizens were touchingly pleased when a newcomer found something to praise. Even the liquor business had its odd, romantic angles such as the dispatching of a long wagon-train loaded with barrels for the mining camps in the faraway mountains—it started when the sun was setting, or at the breaking of the day. But he had left romance at home; he could remember his errands to the wharves on a misty morning and the ships looming up, back from long voyages, laden with strange cargoes. And among his own people, there was always music. Even the citizens of Denver admitted that the Opera House—he could see no reason for their calling it that—was small and stuffy. Tabor had not then glorified the town with his million-dollar Grand. Walhalla Hall—another misnomer—provided house room for lectures, infrequent concerts, and public meetings; but what the people called concert halls were actually places in the lower part of the town which good young men were not expected to visit.

He had time for uneasy thoughts because the work expected of him, though often arduous, could not occupy his mind. The junior partner in the firm was a sensitive



Jew whom he liked; the senior partner, Jewish too, was uncouth and surly. The departure of a wagon-train at half-past six one evening left the warehouse in a state of indescribable confusion, and the proprietor told Frank sourly that the place looked like a pigsty. It was the boy's duty to keep order, but the disarrangement of barrels was inevitable. Frank took the cross comment as a personal affront, went off to eat his dinner in wrathful silence, and returned alone to the warehouse, vengefully prepared to spend the whole night in restoring order. The barrels averaged three hundred pounds and had to be ranged in tiers. He worked until four o'clock in the morning—but next day his salary was raised and he became a young man of substance.

Since his family would never accept any part of his salary, and the idea of saving it was not one he regarded with favor, he bought himself a horse. Prince, saddled and bridled, cost him \$100. Every morning at half-past four he stopped in the kitchen for a glass of milk and a handful of crackers, and went munching to the barn to feed and groom his little bay gelding in preparation for a two-hour ride, from which he returned to breakfast at seven and work at half-past.

He had ridden before on farm horses, as boys will ride, but Prince was an aristocrat, and the more to be valued as his own hard-bought purchase. The unfenced prairie stretched for numberless solemn and solitary miles; away to the west rose the mountains, from Long's to Pike's Peak. He would sit Prince and watch for the sunrise, holding himself quiet, as when, a little fellow, he had seen the terrible loveliness of the Aurora Borealis. Sometimes on an evening ride, a young girl was his companion; the moon would turn mountain and prairie to burnished pewter and the arroyos shot like black arrows across their

path—while wonder silenced the music of their young laughing voices.

Happily there was other music even in Denver. The old square piano in the boardinghouse was no longer used only for solitary practice. On Sunday mornings he played Beethoven piano and violin sonatas with a lawyer from the East—Denver was peppered with lawyers. He taught himself to play cello with a group of chamber players of whose existence he had learned in a romantic fashion, for, when he was walking down the street one Sunday morning—the only day he had time to stroll—he had heard a Beethoven trio beautifully played, and stopped, enthralled, to listen. When the movement ended, he went bravely up the steps and rang the bell. Three Germans, one a music teacher, the others, men in small businesses, welcomed him as the son of Leopold Damrosch. He played duets with his employer's wife, who bore the enchanting name of Seraphine and was even younger than himself. He played alone at a charity concert. Thus he became gradually known in Denver and made friends—not intimates—there was no one in Denver to take Otto's place. The junior partner in the liquor concern, the gentle and amiable Jew, introduced him to members of Temple Emmanuel, the little synagogue which the congregation of thirty had built five years ago—probably the smallest society in Denver, where a bewildering number of churches managed to exist. Frank liked these Jews, who were hospitable and kindly; if they knew little of music, their attitude was receptive.

His first Christmas away from home was approaching. For him there were two great annual festivals, his birthday at the time of the summer solstice when cherries were ripe and roses bloomed, and Christmas at the nadir of the year. A letter came from his mother promising that the box from home would reach Denver in ample time. On Christ-

mas Eve he hurried down to the express office to ask if it were there, but the clerk with mournful pride indicated the storeroom, piled to the ceiling with undelivered parcels. With the triumphant malice such a situation induces, he averred that it would take at least a week to sort them out and transfer them to their owners.

Frank left the office feeling quite forlorn. It was twilight, and the snow blew cold against his face. If he had been at home, he would not have minded the bitter weather, which would then have seemed a proper accompaniment of the Christmas season. But tomorrow, he supposed, must pass like Sunday, except that everyone else would be busy, giving and receiving presents and making merry in families. That evening he could take no satisfaction in his independence. When he had been a little boy in Breslau, he had spent a precious half dollar for a tiny tree, but the family had enjoyed it with him. Now he had plenty of money to buy a tree, but he was grown up, and it would give him no pleasure unless he could share it.

He remembered a doctor's family with several children, and hurrying down the street to the shopping district, he bought entrancing toys, candy, candles, and a tree as large as he could carry on a streetcar. It was so big that he had to stand on the rear platform in the whistling wind and drifted snow, but the thought of the fun he was bringing with him broke the force of the weather. He rang the bell; the mother of the family opened the door.

Her welcoming face changed lamentably as she made out the tree, the packages, and his distended pockets. With great embarrassment she explained that she was a rabbi's daughter and her children knew nothing whatever about Christmas. A less poised or more dogmatic young man might have silently disappeared into the storm at her dampening announcement, but Frank had the tact which goes with genuine kindness. After brief deliberation, he

suggested that the tree could not hurt the children because it would not have any religious meaning for them, and that they would enjoy a pretty little tree with lighted candles; Christmas meant a great deal to him, and this year he could not expect to have any Christmas unless some of its joy came to him from her children's happiness—which little speech happily convinced the conscientious mother.

His first American song had been the nonsensical

Shoo! fly, don't bother me,  
I belong to Company G.

Now, as his twenty-first birthday drew near, he joined not Company G but Company B of the First Regiment of the Colorado National Guard. The step had social significance, for the militia was popular and the élite of Denver went to the annual balls of the Governor's Guard. Frank enjoyed dancing, liked the chance to meet with many types of men, and was enthusiastic about the drill, just as in his Breslau boyhood gymnasium days had provided the pleasantest features of school life. The organization of the Governor's Guard was purely democratic, and no inflexible barrier separated officers and men. Frank was a personal friend of his captain and frequently played whist at his house. He never saw active service, but passed a memorable night with his regiment camped in the armory in hopeful expectation of being sent to quell an Indian uprising—until at dawn the men gloomily dispersed because regular troops had been judged better fitted for field duty.

In the autumn of 1879 Frank assumed new duties for which his education and culture had prepared him, although he was a novice in the bypath which led to his life-long career. The Congregational society of Denver was building a new church and intended to install a pipe organ; its membership was not large, but included many leading citizens who did not neglect the worldly interests of their

denomination; the more fashionable the church, the greater their reflected glory. The name of Frank's famous father had been heard even in Denver, and he himself had in these months gained something of a reputation as a pianist; so it was not altogether strange that the music committee of the new church invited him to become their organist and choirmaster. Since he had never played an organ, he refused, but there was a dearth of organists in the little city—and the committee persisted, explaining that he was especially needed to show off the new instrument at the service of consecration. After some argument, Frank consented to play for the great occasion. He had done all that could be expected in proclaiming his unfitness, and he was eager to try the organ. The committee promised him several weeks to study its mechanics, and in the interval of waiting he prepared a program and rehearsed the quartet with the church piano. As the inaugural day approached, he grew uneasy; the organ was not finished, he began to fear it never would be finished in time for him to learn the pedals and stops. He knew how surely the bass would punish his uninstructed and unwary feet, and he had not only his own reputation to protect, but that of the Damrosch family. Only one hour before the service, the organ was finally declared complete. He had to play it without any opportunity to practice; but, by eliminating all but the most essential pedaling and using the stops with gingerly caution, he achieved success, and everyone else was as delighted as he himself was relieved. The music committee, undismayed by his connection with the liquor business and the fact that he was not a "professing Christian," renewed their efforts to secure him as organist and director. Frank agreed—but made the cool stipulation that the music committee which engaged him should be abolished, otherwise his youth and his acknowledged inexperience would occasion continual meddling. The success of this bold stroke,

which more than one persecuted organist might envy, shows that his talent commanded respect and power. In a city where competition was keener, it would have been impossible.

In Denver there was competition, not among organists but among churches. Even the colored folk supported three congregations, two for African Baptists and one for Methodists. Every society had its peculiar source of pride. The Presbyterians featured an outspoken pastor who proclaimed his hatred of Indians. The Catholics had the largest and richest communion; they had been first to build a church and first to own a bell and a pipe organ; but the Baptists could boast the biggest church in town. Every society which did not possess a pipe organ yearned to build one. When Frank had been playing two years for the Congregationalists, the Society of Temple Emmanuel fell into line, employing the same manufacturer but asking Frank, as a friend of many and as an organist familiar with that make of instrument, to supervise the work and suggest improvements. His early experience with the cabinetmaker in New York helped him to be of use in a matter which he found extremely interesting. He proposed California redwood for the flute stops, because it does not warp or crack. The result was even better than he hoped, for years afterward he found no deterioration in tone. What he learned about organ construction in Denver, he put into practice on a later day when the instrument in the Metropolitan Opera House broke down and no one else could fix it.

The congregation of Temple Emanuel urged him to become their organist, and since the services did not fall upon the Christian day of worship, he could comply without resigning from the Congregational Church. As far as is known, his dual employment caused no uneasiness to adherents of either denomination. The Jewish ritual had its mysterious charm for Frank; the junior partner in the



liquor warehouse initiated him into its intricacies, and other members of the tiny congregation welcomed him into their homes to witness private ceremonies. He, too, had a share in the race, and the immemorial rites deepened and enriched his culture in a special sense. A young man without dogma, he had taken an objective view of the Protestant Sunday morning service; it was brisk and chilling, and he disapproved of the quartet choir in which every singer considered himself a soloist; a congregation never sang well when a quartet would take the responsibility from them.

If any of the Congregationalists had deplored the nature of his secular employment, they need do so no longer, for he had exchanged the liquor warehouse for a real-estate office in which he was a partner. Since he could not furnish capital unless he asked help from his father, he was a partner with a third share in the business instead of one half, which under the peculiar circumstances was not important. His employment was unexacting, the result of a friendship of his early days in Denver; he had left the boardinghouse to live with his partner and his family. It was agreed that Frank could not be expected to insist on people's buying building lots when they emphatically did not wish to purchase, but he could and did keep books and preside over the office. The partner had a charming wife, the pair had several charming children, and the arrangement, if less than practical, was more than happy.

Frank was now three-and-twenty, and in friendly fashion spoke to half the folk in Denver, who knew him as a member of the popular Governor's Guard, a likable, dignified young fellow who did a little business in the ordinary sense, but spent most of his time, and probably made most of his money, in music. Had there been an interested and acute observer of his course, he must have predicted that young Frank Damrosch would end by going alto-

gether into a musical career. Yet in his own mind, Frank was still undecided whether that career in which, like every young man, he hoped to win distinction, would be in business or in music.

In the summer of 1882 he fell ill with typhoid, and, after a slow and dubious convalescence, was advised by his doctor to return to his home in New York. A fortnight of his mother's care and the easier altitude made him almost a well man. Then the family were ready to discuss the question of his staying with them or returning to Denver. They entreated him to remain in New York and suggested that he take an organist's position; this would bring in a little money while he was exploring the musical field.

But from all Frank heard, the musical field was now as constricted as when he had first left New York. Since Colonel Higginson had founded the Boston Symphony, the mighty Theodore Thomas had become more dependent on his post with the New York Philharmonic: it no longer paid him to include the once highly lucrative Boston on his concert tours. This was not only a severe setback for Thomas; it was a source of grief to the Damrosches, because it meant that he would be more than ever in New York. A year before, Frank's father with Walter as his lieutenant had engineered a gigantic festival with a chorus of twelve hundred and an orchestra of three hundred; it might be said that, where Thomas had slain his thousands, the Damrosches had slain their tens of thousands. But there was really no hope of long outfacing Thomas. He had provided the people with his own monstrous circuses, and was now meditating a tour as far west as the Pacific. In the Damrosch home, Tante, who usually sang the solo of the angel in the Oratorio Society, rose to Electra-like fury over the machinations of the enemy and called upon her nephews to avenge the wrongs done to their father.



The light-hearted Walter loved the battle for its own sake, but Frank wanted no more than fair play for the family. He had no wish to enter the lists against the redoubtable Thomas.

While he was thus in doubt concerning his career, he availed himself of a chance to procrastinate a little longer. A New York firm of cigar manufacturers asked him to travel as their representative between Missouri and the Pacific coast with headquarters at Denver, where he would live at the palatial Windsor Hotel and dine prospective buyers. The Damrosch family saw nothing objectionable in the business itself, and it appealed to Frank because it involved extensive tours of the West, with opportunities to be often in Denver. But he was incapable of giving the kind of dinners his employers expected, and, indeed, the nature of his employment was too much at odds with the whole course of his life to satisfy him. Before the year closed he was through with it, and had committed himself more deeply to music.

Yet he was to make one more venture into business which, fortunately, would be the last. He had sold hats, liquor, tobacco, and real estate with a good-humored distaste for each; now he was to sell music and musical instruments. When he was on the eve of returning to New York to make his report and offer his resignation to the tobacco firm, his old chief in the liquor business approached him with a proposition; if Frank would set up a music store in Denver, he would furnish the capital and be content with half the proceeds.

Frank had never liked the man, but he was fascinated by the prospect of buying pianos, stringed instruments, and stacks of music in New York. He accepted, and back at home after he had freed himself of the coils of the tobacco business, scurried about among the music dealers. One family friend, Mr. Schirmer, promised to send new and

worth-while publications; another, Mr. Steinway, regretted that a rival Denver firm already had the agency for the Steinway piano. The Knabe, however, proved available, and he secured also a good make of reed organ—popular with ranchers, small Denver householders, and those poor or parsimonious congregations which did not aspire to the pipe-organ level—and also the agency for a good grade of stringed and wind instruments. Returning to Denver, he rented a shop across from the fine new Opera House with which Tabor had dazzled the West. His clever hands put up the shelves, dressed his window, and arranged the stock. For a short time he prospered and was happy; then, with horror and alarm, he learned that his partner had borrowed heavily on the business; he had used Frank's name, and there were notes to meet. Frank had no money; his own honor and his family's went in question. In his distress he walked the floor all night; but in the morning he saw a way out of his desperate strait: he would trust an honest competitor where his dishonest backer had rooked him. He went to a rival whom he had always liked, told him the circumstances, and asked him to take over all the musical instruments, and allow him to have the entire stock of music. He proposed renting a larger store where they could install themselves as independent dealers in allied lines. The arrangement was successful, especially so since it offered considerable freedom in the matter of attendance; one could easily "keep store" for the other, and Frank was not so confined that his musical projects languished.

From the perspective which his recent visit to New York had furnished, he saw that the musical needs of Denver could, in the first instance, be best served by the forming of an oratorio society organized on the same general lines as his father's.

The ambitious citizens of Denver had already gaily ad-

ventured into so many fields of musical art that Frank could scarcely expect to move into one where he would have no predecessors. There had been a choral society of sorts since 1868, and in 1880, a year after it had climaxed its career by producing the *Messiah*, Frank himself had led the members briefly under their latest name of the New Choral Union. But it was already in the dying condition in which his father had found the Breslau Philharmonic, and yielded presently to a rival society which in turn expired when the Englishman who conducted it returned to his own country. Now the field was clear. In the late autumn of 1882, Frank united the scattered members of the New Choral Union and sent an invitation to every church singer in Denver, suggesting that he devote each Tuesday evening to the study of choral music. He made it plain that the word *study* was what he meant; there would be no opportunity to "show off" at concerts. He could promise, however, that it would cost no singer more than his time and work; he would himself pay for the practice hall, the lights, the music—and give his services. Eighty singers from the host of churches precariously supported by a population of forty thousand appeared in answer to his summons. That he could keep so large a chorus interested through an entire season without the stimulus of preparation for a concert was a remarkable achievement. When in the next autumn the constituents reappeared at his call, their spokesman expressed the common wish to organize a club with dues which would relieve the director of outlay. With wonderful humility, he added that, when Mr. Damrosch thought they sang well enough, they would like to give concerts. Such was the origin of the Denver Chorus Club, and except for the trial exploit of the *Messiah*, of which no more than mention can be found, oratorio was introduced to Denver by Frank Damrosch and his Denver Chorus Club. The Baptists scored heavily in

the rivalry between denominations, because their auditorium, which was the largest, was chosen for the performance. It was rumored, too, that Mr. Damrosch considered their organ the best in town, an important reflection since the *Elijah* was accompanied only by a small string orchestra and the organ must substitute for the brasses. A newspaper editor asked Frank to prepare his own review, but he feared this would be unprofessional. The criticism was next assigned to the sporting editor, who, puzzled by the fugal entrances, described them thus: "The tenors took the lead followed closely by the altos. When they were running neck and neck, the sopranos caught up with them and soon overhauled them, taking the lead by a length and finally the basses caught up until they were all bunched together and it was anybody's race. The race was a draw as they all finished together and all bets were off."

At Christmas he had the satisfaction of presenting the *Messiah*, while Walter conducted it in Newark, and their father in New York. But the great event of Denver's musical season was the Washington's Birthday performance or Haydn's *Creation* by the Denver Chorus Club and an orchestra of sixty instrumentalists. The ambitious director had scoured the town for symphony players. The Palace Theater had been the recruiting ground for eleven men; he had secured twenty-five musicians from the new Tabor Grand Opera House, while his personal friends brought the total up to fifty. To this were added ten girls from the Vienna Ladies' Orchestra. Since these young women were employed in the beer garden under the Opera House, it is possible that the Baptist maids and matrons in whose church the *Creation* was performed saw them take their places with wonder and dismay; they might not themselves frequent the beer garden, but they knew well who did.

Nevertheless, the young women played sufficiently well to please their conductor, and indeed the entire perform-

ance was a source of gratification to him. The society of Denver was, moreover, deeply impressed; to boast a season of oratorio was to challenge the superiority of the East on another count. A rather touching incident followed the performance: Frank had expected to pay the instrumentalists, but the girls of the Vienna Ladies' Orchestra refused to take his money. Speaking for all of them, the first violinist thanked him for the pleasure he had given in making it possible for them to play really good music, and added a request not without pathos: would he come and lead them in the practice of the classics? It would have to be in their only free time, on Sunday mornings. The entreaty pleased him beyond measure; it confirmed his belief that everyone who was given a fair chance preferred good music to bad.

He was eager to secure additional experience as a conductor, and his resignation as organist of the Congregational Church was not improbably motivated by a preference for working with these young women whose rehearsals interfered with the hour of the orthodox Protestant services. But Frank had not finished his role of Denver organist and, in addition to playing at the Synagogue, accepted an engagement with the Unitarians, whose minister, possibly inspired and certainly encouraged by Frank, announced that he would lecture once a month on the life of some famous composer, whose works would be illustrated by the organ. The citizens were charmed by this novelty with its suggestion of metropolitan culture. At the first lecture the audience crowded the little wooden church; for the second they packed the yard, the more athletic perching on window sills to get as near as possible to the music. A boom in Unitarianism resulted, and the society built a stone church important enough to be described as an "edifice."

In the late spring of 1883 Frank was made happy by

a visit from his father. The mother and Walter were in Europe and the three young sisters remained at home under Tante's supervision, while Dr. Leopold toured the Middle West with his orchestra. The specter of his great rival haunted him even on his travels; he could not include several cities because Thomas had contracted with owners of adequate concert halls not to allow Damrosch to play before he did. The week in Denver was the climax of the tour. After Frank's resignation as a tobacco salesman, he had given up his room at the expensive Windsor Hotel, and the father knew the happiness of having him back as his guest. There Frank's orchestra came to serenade their leader's famous father.

Dr. Damrosch gave eight concerts in Denver, and the newspapers were so loyal to their adopted son and so appreciative of their distinguished visitor that Dr. Damrosch wrote home, "The papers here have the tongues of angels." But he had the nervous and sensitive temperament of the artist, and there were disappointments even in Denver: a blizzard on the twenty-ninth of May amazed and vexed him; when Frank drove him out of the city, they could not reach the mountains for which he longed, because they must be back in time for rehearsal. What was far worse, but annoyed him little more, the manager of the Academy of Music had decamped with the subscription sales, leaving a deficit of \$2,500.

But when music was divorced from economics, Dr. Leopold's judgment was eminently just. He went thoroughly into Frank's musical activities and approved them, until the younger man, looking at his work through the elder's eyes, realized that his labors were not trivial even though their sphere was provincial; they were essentially important, and might even be as good for Denver as his father's were for New York.

As for those friends who were associated with his work,



what could be more gratifying than to reward them by an introduction to his charming father? Here was a man who really was, what Denverites boasted of themselves, "equally at home" in the capitals of Europe and in a Western town. The father could, on his part, write to Tante—whom he called affectionately the "summer mother"—"*Frank is the best and finest and cleverest boy in the world,*" with each word heavily underlined.

During the week after Dr. Damrosch had parted with his son, he met in Kansas City one of his half brothers, Siegmund Damrosch. Born of one father and of mothers who were sisters, they were strangers who could utter none but perfunctory greetings. Saddened by the encounter, he wrote home: "It is one of my greatest comforts that in our intimate family circle there is love enough to keep us united whether in joy or grief. My own early life was embittered through lack of family feeling, but all of you shall have a happier time! There is nothing more wonderful than to realize how love enriches every day! Cling to this feeling of belonging together, then you will find life's true happiness,—See Corinthians XIII. But am I not beginning to preach? Well, I would almost prefer to be a preacher than to be a musician and, anyhow, I should not care to be a musician if I could not, now and then, preach in the language of my art."

Such a letter richly illuminates the secret of those loving, unenvious relations which the Damrosch children always maintained. Reared without dogma, they learned from example rather than precept the moral and social implications of music. Governed by the same ideals, they choose, even in the third and fourth generations, to live as near as possible to each other.

Our young man without dogma continued quietly for another year with his various activities, added to the number of his private pupils, and began to supervise the music

in St. Mary's Academy, maintained by the Sisters of Loreto, where he taught the nuns who handed on his instruction to their pupils. An event of April, 1884, trifling in itself but momentous in its effects, probably resulted from his work in the Catholic convent. The superintendent of the Denver schools asked him to drill the high-school students who were to sing at the commencement exercises, that great social function of the eighties and nineties. The request had been made with an ulterior motive of discerning whether Frank would fit harmoniously into the school system; and the superintendent, after fully satisfying himself, offered him the position of supervisor of music, with \$1,200 a year.

Again Frank's course roughly paralleled his father's; a singing society in Milwaukee invited him to come there at a salary of \$1,500. But Frank was less adventurous than his father, who would have chosen the New World if he could have had Vienna, and he decided to stay in Denver, where he had friends and a following.

The offer had come when he was at last willing to admit his unfitness for a business career. He disliked being on guard against such trickery as his recent partner had practiced; if he had a talent for intrigue, he did not want to discover it, and apparently he could keep himself as competently in the field of music as in business. Although no one of his projects could have supported him in comfort, their combination made him independent.

This field had not hitherto been exploited. Until his appointment there had been no music supervisor in Denver, and the children knew nothing about singing. Only those who played the piano had an inkling of notation. True, they were no worse off than he would have been in his own boyhood, had he been dependent on what he learned in the New York schools. Frank had heard that singing was well taught in the public schools of Boston, his music catalogues



told him that a few manuals on the subject had been published, and he realized the need of all the help he could get. The more he thought of his coming work, the better he liked the prospect. It was at last clear to him that what he enjoyed best was teaching boys and girls and men and women to make music. This was his destiny, such would be his career. The chief difference between our young man and the run of musicians was that, much as he loved music, he cared even more for people. He felt that music was the greatest source of happiness, and he wished to increase the sum of human happiness, so lamentably small; thus it was logically as well as psychologically inevitable that he should become a teacher of music. And since to sing was more immediate than to play an instrument, cost less, was open to more people and made for harmony, he preferred teaching others to sing than to play.

Late in June he went to his father for counsel and understanding. The family were at Westhampton on Long Island, surf-bathing, sailing, playing at tennis. After years of prairie and mountain, Frank discovered that the sea was doubly dear. Yet most of his vacation was spent in planning his program for the work in Denver schools. As he had expected, his father took a keen interest; far from despising the musical education of young children, he undertook to write a group of nursery songs for Century to publish—those charming St. Nicholas songs which made happy a generation. He put aside his own engagements to study the manuals Frank had procured. They decided that Hosea Holt, supervisor of music in South Boston, had developed the best system; and after the necessary correspondence, Frank went to Holt's home in Lexington, where he spent the last fortnight of his leave in being tutored for his new post.

The pleasant family party—the last—was already broken up, but in a way to cause triumphant joy. In August, Dr.

Leopold Damrosch had received a letter from the management of the Metropolitan Opera House offering him the directorship for the season 1884-85, at a salary of \$10,000, and empowering him to sail at once for Europe in order to secure singers for German Opera. With all its drawbacks, chief of which was the difficulty of finding desirable artists disengaged in the late summer, Dr. Damrosch did not hesitate. This was the opportunity for which he had been waiting ever since he left Breslau thirteen years before.

Frank, prepared and eager, went back to Denver, where the central high and twelve grammar schools were to be under his musical jurisdiction. He summoned the classroom teachers and explained his method: they were to teach the children to sing by note; they would drill on the scale and its intervals until the *sounds* were familiar; then they would name the notes and afterward show the symbols; the movable *do* would be used. Many of the teachers knew Mr. Damrosch, and some had sung under him. His youthful dignity and magnetism made them all his allies. Twice weekly he visited each school. To those in the outlying districts he rode horseback, and the children were fascinated by his appearance; here came a gentleman in high boots who was going to teach them to read notes and then to sing them.

After indefinite years, his life was at last wholly devoted to music. He was a school supervisor, had private pupils, instructed the nuns of St. Mary's Academy, assisted at concerts, held two church positions, drilled an orchestra, directed the Denver Chorus Club, and, self-taught, played the cello in a string quartet. At an age comparable to his father's when he had put medicine behind him, the son as quietly turned his back upon business makeshifts. He had accepted his destiny and supposed that Denver would be to him what New York was to his father; in the expanding limits of the Western city, he would work out his career.

Yet for him those limits would expand no further. On Sunday, February 15, 1885, as he sat at his organ in view of the congregation, an usher stealthily handed up a telegram. A vague dread deepened his unwillingness to open it in that public place. When he could read it unobserved, he learned that his father was ill. When he went unhappily to his house, he found a second message: Dr. Leopold Damosch had died that day.

## CHAPTER V

### YEARS AT THE OPERA: PART I (1885-1886)

THE FORTNIGHT which followed the death of Dr. Leopold Damrosch was one of the most sorrowful of Frank's life; it was also, perhaps, the most exciting. The event roused him to actions altogether at variance with the peaceful trend of his immediate past. Two days after that sad Sunday on which his father died, he was commissioned a second lieutenant in the National Guard, but the appointment, to which he had looked forward with boyish pride, came stripped of its importance. All that could touch him now had to do with his family. Through a rapid exchange of telegrams, he arranged to meet Walter in Chicago, where his brother was bringing the Metropolitan Opera Company, pluckily taking the father's place on the much advertised tour. In Chicago the brothers could talk over their plans for the Damrosch future.

It was evident that the younger son had taken the father's blessing, but Frank never thought of him as Jacob the Supplanter; he realized the inevitability of the succession and would not have had it otherwise. Walter was marked out for glory, but in himself Frank recognized the head of the family, a man twenty-five years old, upon whom the duty of providing for the others devolved most heavily. He had always been more alive to the responsibilities of his life than to the possibilities of exploitation which it afforded, and he determined that his pleasant career in Denver should not interfere with his ultimate duties. It was matter for regret that he could not be at his mother's side during the stately funeral at the Opera House—there had

not been time for him to make the journey—but she should not again lack his supporting arm.

Dr. Leopold Damrosch had worked almost to the end of the opera season, which had provided a mighty climax to a career whose course had been darkened by struggle and disappointments. He had conducted all except the last regular performance. After his death, John Lund, an assistant chorus master and conductor, had directed the rest of the five supplementary performances in New York; and Walter, who had conducted three times during his father's illness, undertook the leadership on the brief tour of Boston, Chicago, and Philadelphia.

Even the most devoted of sons could not be oblivious to the fact that his father's death provided an opportunity on which all his subsequent career might hinge. Walter had loved his father with unusual warmth, and could regard his present course as the most fitting way to do him honor. He had recently passed his twenty-third birthday, and though little experienced as a conductor, possessed ability, charm, and verve, and had a united company at his back. Dr. Damrosch had assembled a group of singers uncommonly willing to subordinate themselves for the sake of the operas they were performing. They had valued him highly, and to them Walter was a likable boy in a romantic situation.

Frank arrived in Chicago on Sunday, February 22, expecting to meet Walter early the next morning; *Tannhäuser* was scheduled for a Monday evening performance. He found considerable Damrosch publicity in the *Chicago Tribune* and read with a fresh sense of pity and desolation a long account of the funeral which ended, "His family are utterly prostrated by the sudden and awful blow."

When he inquired the hour at which the West Shore train would arrive, he was horrified to learn that at three o'clock that Sunday morning, it had stuck in a snowbank

south of Albany. Disaster traveled with the German Opera Company. After they had been dug out of the snowbank, a coupling broke; the train was already fifteen hours late when it reached Buffalo. Frank spent that day and night in the most wretched anxiety. Brought up to feel that any performance is sacred, he had in this instance an exalted wish to see his father's purpose realized. And if the company defaulted because of weather conditions, the loss in money would be great beyond his reckoning, since the Metropolitan had taken no responsibility besides the loan of costumes and scenery. He apprehended also what the opportunity meant for his young brother with a clarity which Walter may well have felt would be indecent in himself.

On Monday morning he visited the office of the general manager of the railroad and haunted him hour after hour until, in pity for his situation and weariness at his persistence, he was handed a letter to the train dispatcher in South Chicago, ordering that the opera train be given the right of way on its arrival. He rode in a locomotive to the dispatcher's office and there sheltered himself, a deplorably anxious figure, to strain his eyes through the dirty windows. Already it was six o'clock, and the opera was scheduled to begin at eight. Train after train lumbered in under a burden of ice and snow and paused at the dispatcher's office, while the engineer received and read his "flimsy," the scrap of paper on which his instructions were typed. The engineer of the "Limited" learned with indignation that his fast train was to be sidetracked, grumbled that the Great Mogul itself must be expected—an expression easily understood in those days when the "Mogul" engines stood for all that was mightiest in machines.

At eight o'clock, the hour at which the overture should have commenced, the opera train was first sighted. While the weary engineer glanced at his flimsy, Frank swung

himself aboard and hunted up Walter, whom he found in a state of terrible excitement. The brothers embraced. Grief and the great enterprise which was a memorial to their father, united them as never before. But through disjointed question and answer persisted the agonizing doubt: Would the audience wait?

Before riding out from the city, Frank had done all that was possible to expedite the company's passage from the station to the theater. He had carriages in readiness, and a line of wagons waited to transfer the scenery and costume trunks. When the train pulled in, the brothers separated, Walter hurrying to the theater, Frank remaining to see the last of the properties shifted to the end wagon. In spite of his efforts, the baggage men lost many of the trunks with the costumes required by the ballet and *Tannhäuser*.

The carriage drivers, unused to opera folk, left the artists at the main entrance. When they entered and discovered the error, they could do no more to rectify it than to make their way up the side aisles instead of the center. Frank arrived in time to follow the matronly figure of Madame Friedrich-Materna striding vigorously along, a valise in either hand, while the audience gaped and tittered. By this time it was nine o'clock: suddenly the mayor appeared and addressed the audience, asking everyone to be patient—the company had been forty-nine hours on the road—surely no one ought to object to waiting for the sake of the noble young man who was carrying out his father's plans for the benefit of Chicago's citizens.

Behind the scenes, Frank had come upon chaos: the scenery had been hurled into the flies, the trunks were piled in monumental confusion, and the members of the ballet were scurrying hither and yon, hopelessly trying to secure bits of costume. That night few of them found sufficient suitable articles in which to appear and the ballet had to



be cut; wigs and footwear appropriate to *Tannhäuser* were never unearthed, and Anton Schott was garbed not like a medieval knight but as a huntsman from *Der Freischütz*. Frank could at any rate sort out and marshal the orchestra into the pit. At a quarter to ten, he had them ready to play, but Walter decided to gain a little more time for the troupe by making a speech to the audience. Then he played the overture. Before its close, Frank rushed down to his brother and urgently begged him to repeat it. Walter did so, tumultuous applause followed—and a further wait of twenty minutes. Then, at long last, the curtain rose upon a diminished ballet, and the audience settled themselves to listen and admire.

After a performance which, if unsatisfactory to the principals, succeeded in pleasing the audience, the Damrosch brothers and most of the troupe repaired to the Sherman Hotel for a much needed supper. The artists had given their best, a little for the youthful hero, more for the dead, and most, perhaps, because it had turned out to be a jolly and enlivening occasion. They feasted royally at a long table, and the bereaved young men made merry with the rest; the tension of delay, the triumph of accomplishment, the exciting reunion, all were mingled in a poignancy very far from pure pain.

They slept the few remaining hours, and in a long talk Tuesday morning planned the Damrosch future. Marie was twenty-one, and would be married at once to a young chemist; the father had sanctioned the engagement. Elizabeth, whom everyone called Ellie, was not yet in her teens, and Clara was barely fifteen; both required further education. Tante, who supported herself in part by the salary of a church position and her classes in Miss Spence's select school, must have a home and provision for old age. The mother would naturally be the first care of her sons. To them, in their youth, Tante and the mother seemed ancient

women of whom no great exertion should be asked. The family had always been expensive; the brothers, sharing a deep sense of responsibility, felt that this was right and even inevitable.

Walter, feeling no doubts concerning his own future, begged Frank to come home with him and enter the musical world of New York. Rather sadly, Frank agreed that he must leave Denver as soon as he had fulfilled his present obligations. For that week at least he would greatly have liked to remain in Chicago with Walter and hear more opera, but even in this crisis he would not permit himself a longer absence from his work.

Only bit by bit did Frank gain from his brother's sorrowful remembrances the story of his father's death and funeral. It was impossible for the one to speak and the other to listen connectedly. The elder brother heard that on Tuesday afternoon their father had come home very tired from a rehearsal of the Oratorio Society—Verdi's *Requiem* had been announced for the following week—and lain down on his bed without opening the register or pulling a quilt over him. When the mother came home she had found him shivering but decidedly feverish and called a doctor. It was pneumonia complicated by the old pleurisy. Walter conducted *Tannhäuser* in his father's place. But when the father realized that he could not conduct *Die Walküre*, his joy and pride, he went over the score with Walter, holding the music sheets as he lay in his bed, and showing him here a beat, and there a finesse of interpretation. When next morning Marianne Brandt sent in a note praising Walter's conducting, the father said in a contented whisper, "Yes. I knew Walter could do it!" Thus he cast his mantle over the younger son. On Saturday the opera was *Le Prophète*, of which Walter had not so much as seen the score. For his father's sake he conducted and got through somehow—not too badly if what

Marianne Brandt said was true. At three the next morning, long, long before the February dawn, the crisis came and passed, disastrous; the doctors—there were now two—said he must die that day. Four days only he had lain in his bed, and life was going out. He was fifty-two years old. How often he had said with his heart-warming smile, "Next year will be easier!" He had hoped for a peaceful old age spent in some sleepy German town. There would be no next year—no old age—*keine Ruh'* for the dear one. He was conscious until past noon of Sunday, even then calling for a score on which he wished to show Walter a minor point. After that he wandered in his speech, was troubled about the Verdi *Requiem* and his family's future. They told him continually that provision was made for everything, and this seemed to content him. He ceased to know them, and at a quarter to two, he died. Then came the funeral. When an emperor lay in state, he received no higher honors. The *Herald* stated that since Lincoln's cortège had passed through New York, no funeral had excited such interest—and Lincoln died twenty years ago. There had been tickets of admission—one had been kept for Frank—announcing the hour of four on Wednesday, February 18, the place, the Metropolitan Opera House. The galleries and boxes were draped with black; a black catafalque was erected close to the conductor's stand. The boxes were reserved for their owners, but every other seat was open to the public; did Frank remember how courteously the father had admitted strangers to Oratorio rehearsals? He would glance up at the balcony and say that he was glad to welcome them; he would not have wanted anyone turned away when, for the last time, music was made for him. The aisles, the corridors, every seat in the house except those of the family box were filled long before the hour. No, the mother, Tante, and the girls had stayed at home; and though Walter had been there, he had

kept out of sight. The box remained dramatically empty. The flowers were magnificent: a crown of white lilies on a black velvet cushion rested on the casket. And the rites were sublime. Dr. Adler had returned in haste from Chicago and had spoken briefly, Bishop Potter had written a wonderful letter which Dr. Cooke read, Henry Ward Beecher made an address and sank back, apparently overcome with emotion. The musicians were too deeply affected to perform the solemn music as it deserved. Bach's *When I too am departing* and Mendelssohn's *To Thee, O God* were sung by the Oratorio Society, and Weber's *Rasch tritt der Tod den Menschen an* was sung by the male artists and men of the Metropolitan chorus standing in a line along the front of the stage. After this "Christian" music, there had been an odd touch of paganism when the stage manager declaimed a German poem over the bier and finished by addressing the orchestra thus:

Ye heroes in Walhalla now prepare  
To greet the hero who is nearing there.

Then as well as they could for their tears, the men played Siegfried's funeral march. As for the future, which must now be their chief concern, the directors of the Metropolitan did not intend to pass over Dr. Leopold Damrosch's son. There was no fear of Thomas coming in as joint conductor; they knew better than to believe that Walter would "serve with his father's bitter rival," as the *Herald* had expressed it. Walter said he could safely promise Frank his own old office of assistant conductor and probably in addition that of chorus master.

Frank went quietly back to Denver. What he had seen in Chicago, and what Walter had told him, made up a doubtful picture of the brilliant, insecure, intriguing life of opera. He knew much of operatic music, but almost nothing of the stage. Until that week he had never heard

an opera, except for *L'Africaine* which he remembered from his Breslau boyhood, when his father had presented a season of opera with unpleasant financial results.

If he were now to direct the opera chorus, the work would not be distasteful, although he would rather have continued to supervise the music in the Denver schools where he could already see astonishing progress. If he left Denver, he was afraid that all he had done would be lost; the man likeliest to succeed him; although invariably correct, would never under any circumstances become inspired. Frank did not want the children to learn to sing in school, and, once out of it, forget to sing. He had imagined all the children and young people of Denver singing as long as they lived, now in their homes, churches, schools, at parties and sociables; when they grew up, making melody among their children, as his mother and father had done.

That father had sanctioned his work in Denver, so that it seemed to him to bear a new accolade of value; in leaving it, he felt as if he once more left behind the happy work of their last summer together. In Denver he had many friends who were of his own making, while in New York many friends had been his because he was one of the family. Now he must leave them all with his churches, his chorus club, the quartet for which he had taught himself to play cello, his pious nuns and his ladies of the beer garden; all must be abandoned. In Denver he had been free; if he went back to the family, could he keep that sense of being his own man? When he left college, when he traveled westward, he had exercised his free will; to forsake Denver was, he feared, to renounce his right to order his life.

After the close of school, he said his farewells and went to his mother, whom he found displaying a courage born of pride in herself and her dead husband and of confidence in her children. Marie, her oldest girl, was already married to Ferdinand Wiechmann. Walter was in Europe engag-

ing singers. He had been made assistant to Mr. Stanton, secretary of the board of directors of the Metropolitan, and had, as he expected, secured to Frank the posts of chorus master and assistant conductor. Now Walter had preceded Stanton on the way to Europe to organize a company and, if feasible, to engage Anton Seidl, then at the Municipal Theater in Bremen, as principal conductor. Mrs. Damrosch was intensely ambitious for Walter. Indeed, the family were united in their hopes for the handsome, gifted youth who seemed divinely appointed to carry on his father's work.

The younger girls and Frank helped their mother and Tante to break up the old home, place all the furniture in the Metropolitan storage house, and move for the summer to a cottage at Westhampton, though not that which they had occupied the year before when the father was living. They were scarcely settled when Mrs. Damrosch suffered a fresh grief, difficult for any woman to endure, but perhaps especially for a German: all her furniture was lost in a fire at the storage house and with it innumerable treasures and keepsakes, including Frank's weekly letters from Denver during his six years' absence. He at least was alive and with her; but the twelve letters from Richard Wagner to her husband, and a sheaf of letters from other prominent European musicians, could never be replaced.

It was natural to the Damrosches to live expensively and to feel poor, but there were advantages in their habit of associating with wealthy and cultured people. Frank, who could never be accused of snobbery, was one of the founders of the Westhampton Yacht Club. The climax of the season was the race of 14-foot dinghies in which three clubs competed. The large luncheon following the event was given at the Damrosch cottage, the recent bereavement not curtailing the customary hospitality, for the Damrosches lived as much as possible in the way the father would have wished.



Walter returned from Europe, and the family resumed residence in New York. They settled themselves, mother and Tante, two daughters and two sons, in an apartment on West Thirty-fourth Street, convenient to the Opera House. Clara and Elizabeth, whom their father had nicknamed Beedy-Boo and Baddy-Boo, continued to attend a private school. Clara, too sensitive to be happy in public school, was already a talented pianist, and Elizabeth showed gifts in drawing and design. The Metropolitan chorus was in rehearsal, and Frank went daily to the Opera House, remaining there from nine in the morning until midnight.

Autumn lengthened, and the soloists appeared one by one like exotic birds. Some of them he had met in Chicago: Auguste Krauss, Adolf Robinson, Madame Schroeder-Hanfständl, and Marianne Brandt, who, ugly in face but beautiful in power, was especially dear to him as a link with his father. He did not forget how she had exclaimed, "The artist, yes! But, ah, the man!" She was still the principal contralto, but Lilli Lehmann, once the beautiful Rhine maiden of Bayreuth, had replaced Materna as leading soprano; the noisy and exigent Schott and the eminently handsome little Max Alvary had joined the company; and Emil Fischer had come from the Court Opera of Dresden, never to return to the European stage because of contract difficulties with the Royal Intendant. Frank felt an instantaneous liking for Fischer, of whom he took his only formal lesson. Fischer, who believed that Frank's voice warranted a stage career, was himself gifted with a warm, lovable nature and extraordinary talent as an actor, although he confessed that he could honestly recall only three occasions when he had enjoyed a stage representation in which he had performed.

Lilli Lehmann, who had impressed Dr. Damrosch so favorably that he had attempted to secure her the year before, was the most popular singer of the season. She



was much attached to Frank, who took his work as soberly as she did her own.

*Lohengrin* was the first opera at the Metropolitan that season, and the inexperienced Frank was uneasy about the chorus tempi. As the twenty-third of November drew near, he was literally rehearsing the chorus all day long. One morning before he began his drill, a short, youngish man, with a large calm face and thick long hair combed back from a square forehead, came in and seated himself. Frank knew from his appearance that he was one of the principals, and guessed that it was Anton Seidl, the conductor. To his great relief and pleasure, Seidl, after sitting through the rehearsal with dubious immobility, came up to him and said he had never heard a better. Seidl was not only satisfied with what he had seen; he had taken Frank's measure and thereafter left the conductor of the chorus to himself. In spite of Frank's invitations, he never attended another rehearsal, evincing a largeness of mind which kept him from unnecessary interference.

Anton Seidl came to the Metropolitan as a young man, although greatly Walter's senior and incomparably more experienced. For seven years he had been an inmate of Wagner's household, and had written out the score of the *Nibelungen Ring* from the composer's careless script with such beautiful precision that Wagner wrote on a copy dedicated to him:

For only Seidl himself has sung  
Into the Ring of the Nibelung.

He was eminently suited to become Dr. Leopold Damrosch's successor, and it now became apparent that what had seemed Walter's great opportunity had come too early for him to benefit fully. He was allowed to conduct, but seldom to conduct those operas in which he was ambitious to excel. Seidl made his own debut in *Lohengrin*.

Walter conducted *Le Prophète*; and, since Seidl was busy preparing the new opera, *Die Königin von Saba*, while Walter was already experienced in *Die Walküre*, the latter was also intrusted to him.

*Die Königin von Saba* had presented Frank with a difficult problem; there was a vast amount of chorus work, but the music for the chorus did not come to hand until the middle of November, while December 2 was the night set for the first performance. In Denver he had made his debut as organist on an organ finished an hour before the service; now, as then, his reputation depended on overcoming obstacles which no one would recognize. The management was determined not to change an opera after it was announced, and Goldmark's new work was eagerly awaited. Much money had been spent—report said \$75,000. There was no help for it; so when at last the music came, Frank began the most intensive drill.

While he was busiest, the *première danseuse* wandered disconsolately into his practice room. Since he looked kind and intelligent and understood German, she asked him if he would be so good as to tell her what her solo dance was about; if the ballet master knew, he had not told her. Frank was always happy to have a willing pupil. At the piano he went through the famous *Dance of the Bees*, section by section, explaining where the bee flew from the maiden, where the bee flew after her in pursuit and counterpursuit, until at the close she caught him fast in her veil. When the girl had gone away, he reflected briefly on the mental processes of a ballet master from Budapest, where ballet dancers flourished, who did not trouble to tell his dancers what the ballet was intended to portray. Next day he walked in upon the gentleman and saw him pounding the floor with a stick while he bawled a tarantella which had nothing whatever to do with *Die Königin von Saba*. In the interests of his art, Frank could be stern.

He halted the rehearsal, the ballet master was dismissed, and Frank assumed the training of the ballet of twenty-four. His relation with young girl singers and dancers was oddly charming. Young as he was, they actually revered him and were timidly in love with his kind, serious face, his pointed beard and beautiful dark eyes.

The other new work presented that year was *Die Meistersinger*, in which Emil Fischer played Hans Sachs to the great admiration both of Frank and of some twenty thousand other New Yorkers. Sixty men from Dr. Damrosch's old Arion and from the Liederkranz societies augmented the usual chorus, bringing the strength in Frank's department up to 142. Frank was learning as fast as he could teach. He observed with the closest attention the usages of the soloists who had learned from Wagner himself how to interpret his creations.

He had great responsibility but, outside of the Opera House, expected and received no recognition. Morning, afternoon, three evenings a week, he drilled his chorus. On the other three evenings he conducted rehearsals of the full orchestra. At the performance, he was behind the scenes directing all offstage music, taking his cue from a peephole in the curtain—although Seidl trusted him to start the *Pilgrim's Chorus* without a signal, and in *Tristan* the horn fanfares were given independently of the orchestra. It was not, of course, essential that he follow the complete score for these occasional entrances, but he chose to do so, conceiving it a part of his own musical education.

Of all that he did, he enjoyed most the *Arrangier Proben*, delightful, almost domestic rehearsals without orchestra. The principals, the chorus, the supers, the ballet were all present; Walter, perhaps, would be at the piano, the stage manager excitedly directed the business, and Frank in full glory conducted the entire cast. That season it is recorded that there were 110 rehearsals of the chorus,

54 *Arrangier Proben*, 60 ballet rehearsals, 19 special orchestral rehearsals. His work was excessive, but during the first year the glitter of the opera had not tarnished, he was working with his brother on the great enterprise his father had begun, and everyone liked him. Mr. Stanton, the secretary-director, and the most civil of men, put a box at his disposal where evening after evening his mother sat like a queen among her daughters and her friends.

The season over, Stanton, Walter, and Frank all went to Europe on the business of securing artists—exciting work, and new for the older brother. It was his first visit to Europe since he had left it as a child. Ellen Terry and Henry Irving sailed on the same boat as the Damrosches, on the way to do preparatory study in Germany for their *Faust*. They invited Walter and Frank to see their play in London on their way home and promised them supper in the famous Green Room. Ellen Terry and Frank both loved to dance and almost daily on the voyage they danced together on the deck.

Stanton, empowered to offer three-year contracts to singers, intrusted Frank with the business of engaging several artists, among them Albert Niemann, whom he found at the Starnberger See near Munich. From there Frank went to Stuttgart to interview a tenor. He did not approve of him, but discovered a charming young dramatic singer, a Fräulein Förster. When he visited her at the hotel, he met her fiancé, Viktor Herbert, first cellist at the Stuttgart opera. They wished to come to America together, in which case they could afford to be married. Frank, satisfied that young Herr Herbert, who it appeared was really an Irishman, was not only a good cellist but a fine musician, procured a contract for each of them.

Frank was frequently alone on his travels, but no difficulties affected his enjoyment. The language was as familiar to him as that of the country he had come to call

his own. He looked so amiable and was so well-bred that everyone he met was pleasant to him. On his way from Munich to Berlin, he formed a temporary acquaintance with the sister of the King of Württemberg, whose railway carriage he had unintentionally taken. She would not permit him to vacate, and when he heard her mention to her lady-in-waiting a debt of three marks, Frank concluded with quiet humor that he was quite at home in a royal environment.

At twenty-seven, Frank thought of fifty-five-year-old Joseph Joachim as an old gentleman. He had not forgotten his boyish adoration for the great violinist, but it had paled into respect for his past as a virtuoso and reverence for his father's friend. He hunted Joachim out in Berlin and found him in a large house where he had installed a music school endowed by the Emperor. He was exceedingly pleased at Frank's visit, and wished to know all that had happened to the Damrosches in the decade since Dr. Damrosch had been in Europe for the Bayreuth festival. When the necessity for a rehearsal interrupted the talk, he asked Frank to come with him as auditor. Frank agreed with pleasure which was succeeded by embarrassment as he watched Joachim conduct the second act of *Fidelio*. He was exacting, he seemed to want a good performance, from time to time he interrupted, and yet he was a very poor conductor. Frank, who knew a great deal about teaching, decided that the old gentleman had no right to run a music school. What he ought to have was a studio with private violin pupils, because he was interested in no other instrument. To play the violin and to teach others how to play it meant all of life to him; but he was quite wrong in attempting to create a musical universe.

It was not Frank's affair, and he was most unwilling to express his disapproval, but when they walked out together after the rehearsal, Joachim asked his opinion.

Frank tried evasion, but Joachim persisted, uneasily aware that his young friend had detected those flaws of which he himself was conscious without knowing how to correct them. At last Frank reminded him that in several places the violins had been unable to follow his beat.

"But what could I do? Beethoven *says* four-four time." Frank explained that in cases of extremely rapid tempo a conductor gives two, not four, beats to a measure.

"I never thought of that," said Joachim humbly. "Of course, that's right." Frank thought him very fine for accepting in so kind a way the criticism of a man young enough to be his son.

In Germany that summer Frank sought out only those he must see in the way of business or those whom he felt he ought to see for his father's sake. He did not wish to trespass upon the time of important people. He would not have ventured to address Liszt, had Marianne Brandt not intervened. He had come to the Sondershausen festival with Stanton and Walter. Liszt presided, and Frank had not obtruded himself on his notice because Walter was necessarily prominent, having been invited to conduct while Marianne Brandt sang the aria from their father's *Sulamith*. But Frank had gone to the church and watched Liszt, frail but somehow portentous, sitting in the midst of the nave in a great armchair, while he listened to the performance of his own *Christus*.

At the gala banquet, where fully one hundred musicians sat around one table, Franz Liszt had the place of honor, with Marianne Brandt on one hand and a long line of his favorite pupils on the other. Frank was not unhonored in his own vicinity, where he was placed next to Richard Strauss; but of this distinction he could not know, since Strauss was his junior by five years and, although he had composed a popular *Serenade* for wind instruments and



served as assistant to von Bülow at Meiningen, he had but begun the life which in retrospect seems so brilliant.

While Frank watched and listened with tranquil interest, a waiter brought him a card on which Marianne Brandt had written, "Frank, you ought to greet the master." He rose obediently and went to the place where she was sitting beside Liszt. "This is your godson, Frank Damrosch," she said. Liszt repeated the name twice, embraced and kissed him, asked wistfully why he had been so long in coming. "Your eyes," he added, "are just like your father's." No compliment could have pleased Frank more. He felt touched and honored; his father's worth had been implicitly recognized. Next morning as he walked along a corridor, he saw an open door; within was a piano, and Liszt playing. He wished very much to go in, but felt it wrong to disturb the frail old man. It was his last opportunity. Two weeks passed, July 31 came, and Liszt was dead in Bayreuth.

At Bayreuth, Frank, though far from attaining his full stature as a musician, completed a stage of his development. In Walter's company, he heard *Parsifal* for the first time; it was a deep, religious experience. Ten years had passed since that summer when his father had expounded Wagner's text in his own family. To listen to Wagnerian operas in the sacred surroundings of Bayreuth made him feel like a pilgrim who at last attains the holy city.

A brief stay in England, made memorable by the promised visit to Ellen Terry and Henry Irving, ended the summer's journey and brought Frank's first year at the Metropolitan to a pleasant close. The twelvemonth left him with broader culture, deeper experience of life, and a matured musicianship, but otherwise the same—tranquil in spirit, hard-working, ambitious not for himself, but for the cause of music.



## CHAPTER VI

### YEARS AT THE OPERA: PART II (1886-1891)

FRANK DAMROSCH disliked publicity but did not lack a proper sense of dignity. He had not worked with the Metropolitan Opera for a year without apprehending the vast difference between the obscurity of a chorus master and the importance of his task. The audience did not know of his existence except on the rare occasions when he conducted the ballet; the opera could not do without him, but the yearly salary it paid him was little in excess of the sum which a principal received for a single performance. Other and less personal reasons for his dissatisfaction with conditions at the Metropolitan lay in the hasty preparation necessitated by the production of numerous novelties, in the confusion of artistic aims, and the lack of unity in the performance as a whole. But what vexed him more than anything else was the plain truth that he, who had determined to be an educator, could never educate the chorus into becoming true musicians; all he was able to do was to teach them songs, and then more songs. He did not complain, but in after life his habitual silence on the opera years, a silence rarely broken, and then only with intimate friends, was an index to his fixed dislike.

That he remained in bondage at the Metropolitan for a period equal to that in which he had enjoyed freedom in Denver was due to his increased responsibilities. During the year after his return to New York he had seen as much as possible of Hetty Mosenthal; when he came home from Europe, he realized that she was necessary to his happiness.

The pretty child whom he had met on the sands at Atlantic Highlands had become a beautiful woman in whom he found a thousand graces. Her brown hair curled in charming natural ringlets; the pose of her proud little head, her slow, delicious smile, her taste in dress, the sympathy in her glance—everything about her touched and pleased him. He had never lacked friends and there were those who loved him dearly; but he needed someone to love him best, as he was capable of loving her. He courted her—if one could call it courting—with outward tranquillity; but once when they walked together from Trinity Church two miles and more uptown, he did not know that it was raining. If Hetty knew, she was silent.

Hetty was the niece of Joseph Mosenthal, organist of Calvary, conductor of the famous Mendelssohn Glee Club. Uncle Joseph had come from Cassel, where his father was concertmaster under Louis Spohr. Young Joseph was a talented pupil of that inimitable master, and followed his methods in New York, where he soon became a popular personality in musical circles. As a member of the Mason-Thomas quartet, he did not belong to the Damrosch coterie, so that Hetty and Frank had not become acquainted until a mutual friendship with Otto brought about their meeting.

Hetty had a father and mother whose kindly ways endeared them to their children's friends. Herman Mosenthal was then living conventionally as an insurance man. Rotund and brisk, cheery of voice and pink-cheeked, he spent his leisure at the piano playing admirably either alone or in a duet, with two pianos, or in trios, quartets, and quintets. His performance of German *Lieder* would have done credit to a concert-singer; he sang them with endearing verve. Hetty's mother was a fastidious and exquisite creature, slight, small, and swift. Her wit provoked the smiles of others, but in old age her mirth was clouded by

a touch of melancholy, a shadow to which such natures are peculiarly susceptible.

She had been born in New Orleans and christened Marie Elise Steinau; she was called Elise. Her father, a German doctor, carried her and his wife away from America to Berlin and then to London, where he was the head of a German hospital until Elise's mother died; afterwards in his desolation, he went out to South Africa to serve as a surgeon in the British Army. The post to which he was assigned was too remote to be suitable for his young daughter, and he deposited her with the Mosenthal family in Capetown, where she was infinitely wearied by the gossip about clever cousin Herman Mosenthal, the paragon, late of Cassel in Germany, who was trading upcountry. But when Herman came, Elise felt that his relations had miserably scanted his praises. For such a bridegroom, she did not disdain a wedding journey of many days in an oxcart.

Two daughters, Therese and Hetty, were born to them in the interior, and then a boy, Philip. When Hetty was three years old, the young father decided to leave the rough country where he could neither educate his children nor hope to hear the operas of Richard Wagner. That winter Elise and her three children stayed in Cassel with Herman's mother, a woman remarkable for erudition, adiposity, and a kind heart, while Herman traveled to America on a sailing vessel, a three months' voyage which so completely cured him of the roving disease that he became a confirmed New Yorker. He had astutely timed his arrival to coincide with the close of the Civil War.

When Elise and her children joined him, the family Mosenthal formed a wide acquaintance in German musical circles. Their home was as hospitable as that of the Damrosches, and Elise had not the austerity of Helene von Heimburg. Hetty Mosenthal was like her mother, supple and swift. She could not sing, belonging perhaps to

Frank's estimated 5 per cent of the women who can never learn to sing; but her taste was impeccable and her smile was lovely; it came more slowly than she moved, and lingered in repose.

She had not been in Europe since her infancy, when in the summer of 1887, her mother took the two girls, Therese and Hetty, first to England, her own adopted country, and thence to Germany, where her husband's family had originated. Walter Damrosch was in Europe studying with Hans von Bülow, but Frank, the head of the family, had gone to Westhampton to squire his mother, Tante, and the younger girls. When the Mosenthals sailed, he came to town to see them off. It was hard to have Hetty going away just when he had a little leisure in which he could have managed to see more of her. He had not intended to propose just yet, but by chance he was alone for a few minutes with her in the stateroom. Both were terrified at the length of the summer which stretched before them, the width of an ocean which would lie between. They looked sadly at each other, and then he kissed her. He had never kissed her before. Neither of them spoke, but with flooding joy he told himself that Hetty loved him. After watching the steamer out of sight, he went to her father and in the sober fashion of the times asked permission to marry his daughter. Herman Mosenthal, the ex-adventurer whose bride had taken her wedding journey on an African ox-cart, took thoughtful stock of the nervous suitor. His pretty, wilful daughter had done well for herself, and he knew it; but he only said benignly that they would have to find out how his girl's mother felt about it and if she had no objection, he would not withhold his consent.

Frank went joyfully back to Westhampton to tell his news to the family, confident that it would be well received. Tante was excessively romantic; his sisters were of an age when girls have a natural sympathy with all

lovers; his mother approved of Hetty and, what was almost as important, of her background: since her son must marry, she rejoiced that he had chosen a girl who would not find it difficult to become a Damrosch. But Frank had no sooner received the family congratulations, than he fell to worrying lest he had taken too much for granted. Hetty, after all, had said nothing; she had let him kiss her, but perhaps she had been too surprised to object. Every day he wrote her a long letter; sometimes he was sure enough of her affection to mention apartment rentals and an early marriage, but he was never sufficiently convinced to risk mailing these letters until the first from her reached him with its loving reassurance. Then Frank, who never suffered over Hetty's inability to sing, could rejoice over the charm of her letters. Once during the separation, the debonair Walter cabled from Frankfort, "Kissed Hetty today," which proved that Hetty was not only *his*, but one of *them*.

When the Mosenthals returned, he was again immersed in his work and could spend little time with Hetty. He was the organist of the Society for Ethical Culture, the conductor of the Newark Harmonic Society, which Walter had turned over to him, and of the Choral Club, another gift from his brother; his chorus rehearsals at the opera were beginning—his activities knew no pause. He begged Hetty not to prolong an engagement in which he could see so little of her, and with sweet reasonableness she agreed to an early wedding. She chose the tenth of January, the day on which her mother Elise had married the redoubtable Herman, although they had been united in the high summer of South Africa, and she would marry her lover in the depth of Northern winter.

Madam Damrosch, who wished to keep her children with her while she could, suggested that Frank and Hetty occupy two rooms on the floor above her apartment and take their meals with her family. Since Frank had neither

leisure to spend in house-hunting nor the means to afford a comfortable separate establishment, her offer was gratefully accepted. The Mosenthals planned to give their girl a large home wedding; Frank and Hetty discussed the rival attractions of Washington and Niagara Falls for the goal of the few days' journey which his work at the Metropolitan would permit, and decided upon Washington: it would, they trusted, be warmer than New York.

A young man in love, with so many private hopes and plans, might be pardoned if he found it difficult to fix his mind upon a task which was at best uncongenial, but Frank had been brought up in a musician's family where from his first childhood he had seen that the musician's life is inevitably divided into many activities, each of which must be carried through with an intensity of concentration, while everything else is, for the time being, ignored. He carried no more of his private life over the threshold of the Opera House than the warm glow of inward happiness. There was, of course, some satisfaction, some pleasure to be gained from his work. Early in the season, Madam Herbert-Förster, the young singer whom he had engaged in Stuttgart, sang the title role of *Aida* while her husband, Viktor Herbert, played first cello in the orchestra; both of them owed their positions to his good offices. As Stanton's agent he had also engaged Niemann, whose "Tristan" was the sensation of the year. He enjoyed friendships with several of the principals, especially with Lilli Lehmann and Marianne Brandt. To have *Tristan und Isolde* and *Siegfried* introduced to America was a gratifying proof that his father's labors continued to be fruitful, and his admiration for the German romantic school was deepened by the study of Weber's *Euryanthe*, nobly given during the Christmas holidays.

But Spontini's *Ferdinando Cortex* interfered in his private affairs to an extent which made that bombastic opera



forever memorable to him. It was performed on January 6, and the Mosenthals had issued wedding invitations for Tuesday, January 10. *Ferdinando Cortez* was spectacle at its best; Mexico City was destroyed in a bath of steam and red fire in which the chorus stood to sing. Frank shared their horrid situation and afterward, going from the overheated stage into the damp January night, came down with a virulent sore throat. Ill in bed, under a doctor's care and family nursing, he was afraid that he, to whom engagements were sacred, would miss his own wedding; but on Tuesday he managed to rise, dress himself, and under escort reach Hetty's home at the appointed hour. She would not let him undergo the rigors of the reception, and took him away as soon as they were married. They had their little wedding journey and returned, Frank to his work, Hetty to her duty of becoming one of the Damrosches.

The opera season was almost over; it closed in February, three weeks before the great blizzard of 1888. It may have been the flooding of the cellar, as the snow slowly melted, which brought the drainage of the apartment house to the nose of the responsible Frank. The landlord swore as a landlord will that his plumbing was the finest in the city, but Frank continued to sniff disagreeable odors, and consulted the Board of Health. The plumbing condemned, recondite talk of dry wells followed. Hetty was going to have a baby, the first child in the new generation to carry on the Damrosch name, and he thought it both unsafe and highly disagreeable for her to remain in the building while the drains were under repair.

So he carried her away to his place of perfect memories, to the sweeter air in which, when he was twelve years old, he had learned the charm of solitude. He wanted his young wife to see Round Pond and believed he could show it to her as he remembered it, lovely, remote, mysterious.



But it was seventeen years since the boy's visit; the place was strangely changed, had dwindled into the ordinary and merely pretty. Far worse, Hetty was ill with malaria. Feverish and wasted, she lay in her bed; and he could not even stay continually with her, because of the many duties which had still to be performed in the city.

One of these tasks was filial and blessed. On May 5, 1888, the Leopold Damrosch monument was unveiled in Woodlawn Cemetery. The combined efforts of the Arion, the New York Symphony, and the Oratorio societies had erected it, and representatives of all three shared in the memorial service. Frank had been in Denver when the stately funeral of 1885 had filled the Metropolitan Opera House; thus for him the exercises in Woodlawn had a certain painful freshness. A period of such length had taught the Damrosches that they could live without husband and father, but their love and pride outlasted the sharp poignancy of grief, as with exultation they recounted the benefits he had conferred upon his adopted country; he had presented forty-nine major works, introduced to America Berlioz's *Requiem* and the *Damnation of Faust*, Liszt's *Christus* and Damrosch's own cantatas *Sulamith* and *Ruth and Naomi*. Although history with an eye to the spectacular might remember him chiefly as the man who brought German opera to the New World and died in doing it, his loved ones could with more accurate vision joyfully recall the assurance, "Their works do follow them," while they heard the Oratorio Society sing, *When I too am departing*.

When Frank and Hetty returned to New York early that autumn, they spent a few weeks with the Mosenthals, whose residence was inconveniently far uptown from the Opera House. Tante, who was keeping house for Walter in the absence of her sister, abroad that year with her two unmarried daughters, entreated the young wife to return

to the Damrosches. Tante was a delightful woman in any group, but a touch of solitude dismayed her; left to herself, she suffered, and wrote despairing letters to her relatives in Europe. Hetty loved Tante and was devoted to Walter; she made the change with endearing graciousness.

Since her husband could seldom be at home, she must learn either to do without him or to fit her occupations to his. She chose the latter. Whenever she was able, she went to concerts which he conducted, to church where he played the organ. Eager to help him in his work, she learned to type and acted as his secretary. Her translations of foreign songs were of great assistance in later years.

The Sunday services of the Society for Ethical Culture differed from those of the orthodox churches in Denver, rather in the discourse than in the music. Frank found the philosophy of the leader worthy of profound attention. Dr. Felix Adler's study of higher criticism had resulted in a repudiation of the great bulk of Jewish doctrine, but his undisturbed belief in the existence of the moral law had enabled him to found a system of ethics which he believed would solve both individual and public problems. Its principal tenets were three in number: the moral law existed, man had a sense of duty, each human being possessed infinite worth. These principles, once accepted, obligated a man to solve his family difficulties on ethical grounds. It was no less clear that political questions ought to be settled, not by coarsely pragmatic considerations, but by pure justice. Since every individual possessed infinite worth, he who adopted the ethical view of society must become a humanitarian. Dr. Adler's society appealed both to Jews and to Gentiles who were repelled by dogma yet were desirous of consecrating themselves and their families to the ethical conduct of life. Adherents of the Ethical Culture movement became pioneers in tenement-house reform, in

setting up legal aid bureaus, visiting-nurse associations, schools, and courses of adult education.

Frank Damrosch had received a moral but not a religious training. It is not likely that he had listened seriously to the sermons in the Denver churches where he played the organ; even the lectures on great composers which the Unitarian minister had delivered were of no value to him except for their effect on the musical culture of Denver. But Dr. Adler was an original thinker who expressed his ideas in lucid and compelling language, and the philosophy which he preached was one to which Frank was predisposed by nature and education. He had never questioned the existence of a moral law, and he could easily accept the theory that every individual possessed infinite worth—with complete indifference to the standards of his time, he saw no reason for supposing that the “ladies” of the Denver beer garden, and his chorus and ballet girls, were not potentially the equals of the very wealthy women whom he met through their patronage of music. He was, indeed, one of those rare beings described by Kant as, “so sympathetically constituted that, without any motive of vanity or self-interest, they find a pleasure in spreading joy around them.” He was good first by inclination and afterwards by conviction. He never welcomed philosophical discussion. Even with Hetty, he was silent concerning those problems of which men have to think—liberty, immortality, God; in silence he received the truths which were essential to his nature. The dynamic objectivism of Ethical Culture recommended itself to him, and he gave gladly of his strength and time in the free concerts at Workingman’s School, while he considered plans for the future when his life should be more his own.

It was now November, 1888. Rehearsals for the opera had begun a month ago, and it became a question whether

opening night or Hetty's baby would arrive first. The opera won by two days. She had gone to her mother for her confinement, so that little Frank Damrosch was born in his grandfather Mosenthal's home, November 30, while *Lohengrin* held the stage at the Metropolitan. When Frank learned that his son's birth synchronized with Godfrey's entrance on the scene, he suggested Godfrey for a middle name; but it did not seem to suit the small American and was dropped before he was old enough to go to school.

Delighted as the young parents were with the baby, they spent a difficult winter. The child was nervous and restless; he had an alarming trick of sleeping with half-open eyelids. The father and mother alleged that he cried constantly all night long except when they took turns walking the floor with him. At five, an early-rising maid good-naturedly relieved them, and Frank could get an hour or two of sleep before he started for the Opera House. Matters were complicated by the fact that they were not living in a home of their own; their nightly ambulations, of which little Frank soon learned to take advantage, seemed necessary if the child's howls were not to disturb the Damrosch family, to whom they had returned with the small boy. They were hoping to find a German nurse-girl so that from the first the baby should be bilingual, but by January, they were desperate and engaged Swedish Annie, who so endeared herself to the Damrosches that they could never bear to part with her. She was with them fifty years.

Every morning Frank left Hetty and the baby to walk into his other world—the world of the opera, long familiar, but never losing its unreality, heightened of late by the contrast with his new life. A critic so highly qualified could not fail to observe signs of deterioration in the work of that season; Mozart and Weber were omitted from the repertory, and a half-dozen distinctly inferior operas added. There were increasing evidences of slackness, such as Pe-

rotti's being permitted to sing Italian words in *Faust*, while the other principals and the chorus sang in German.

But he had no hope of reforming the opera and in his spare time he was working along the lines of the ambition he had formed in Denver. When the season closed, he gave a series of Wednesday and Friday afternoon talks to teachers on "The Best Methods of Instruction in Vocal Music in Our Schools." A Saturday morning course followed. Many teachers realized that school children sang badly, and really wished to better conditions; Frank's subject matter was well presented, his voice was beautiful, his manner dignified but kindly, and he illustrated his lectures not only with charts and blackboards but with living examples, children imported from Yonkers or brought over from Dr. Adler's Workingmen's School. The result of so much and more was the formation of a Teachers' Music Association of two hundred members, all determined to have Mr. Frank Damrosch give a course of lectures in the following autumn.

There was something very pleasant in the punctilious care with which he credited Mr. Hosea Holt with the method which he had himself done so much to enrich. Besides this brief acknowledgment, an article or a lecture on the subject seldom omitted his cardinal belief that a normal child could and should learn to sing. The next tenet was the necessity of being intelligent: because, when the pupil had been taught to recognize musical sounds, to call them by their names and to know their symbols, correct singing was largely dependent on an understanding of the words of the song; music and poetry belonged together, a harmony of sound and meaning. He did not wish his teachers to use the schoolroom piano for the vocal lesson; it would probably be out of tune, but in any case the children would follow its leading and thus not be independent singers. He deplored the common practice of allowing

pupils to bellow out a song; he would have them sing in sweet and expressive voice. The natural way for them to learn was all but universally denied them in America where mothers seldom sang to their little ones. Yet almost all women had pleasing voices. If the mother would show that she placed a high value on music, her little boy and girl would value it too, because children knew that everything good came from mother. Thus with persuasive arguments he opened the subject before groups of teachers and of clubwomen, trying, as he sometimes put it, to sow seed in a forty-acre lot.

The summer of 1888 found the young Damrosches in better case. The baby, now six months old, cried only when howling was indisputably his right. Annie looked after him and his mother. Tante, who had been lonely all winter, sailed for Europe to join her sister and the girls; and her departure left Frank, Hetty, and Walter at liberty to spend the vacation months as they chose. Walter announced that he would practice the piano, learn to play the trumpet, grow a full beard, and write a book. Frank planned to write up his lectures and possibly a book based on his methods. As for Hetty, her world was Frank's and her baby's, and she welcomed the first opportunity to make a home for them. The brothers decided to take a cottage at Haines Falls in the Catskills. In their desire for uninterrupted solitude, they did not specify the degree of comfort they expected, and when Frank preceded the party in order to get everything ready for Hetty and the baby, he felt that the choice had been unfortunate. They had wished to be secluded from the world, but had not known that the cottage was all but inaccessible on the top of a considerable hill, while the train, halting only long enough for baggage to be flung out, skirted the base, a weary way down the valley. The baby and all his equipment would have to be carried by hand, and Hetty must struggle toilsomely up to



a shabby dwelling. Then Hetty came, escorted by Walter, and all Frank's worries vanished. She approved of everything. She bade the brothers bring in green branches from the wood and fastened the boughs against the stained, unsightly walls; that was what Frank remembered longest about the day of the arrival—how Hetty made the poor place into a bower.

It was a charmed summer. Walter was the best of company. His furious blasts merged into music; Wagnerian motifs and true hunting-calls rang down the forest glades, startling the chance wanderer from the great hotel. Hetty submitted graciously to Walter's practicing—she had married a musician—but she refused to tolerate the beard upon his chin—a chin as handsome and as resolute as her own. Then he came down to breakfast with one side of his face clean as a china plate and the other rough stubble: Hetty could take her choice. But she was firm, and Walter with mock reluctance shaved his beard. She shared her husband's love for the younger brother, who was always amiable and pleased her by his devotion to her baby. He suggested starting a bank account for little Frank and announced that he would give a Wagner lecture for his nephew's benefit at the Kaaterskill Hotel, a mile away. Hetty and Frank walked over with him, and after the lecture the three celebrated with supper and a bottle of champagne. It was stimulating to mingle once more with the world which they had so recently abjured. Then they started discreetly home, but unluckily for the hero of the afternoon, Frank took them by a short cut which led over a railroad trestle. There Walter showed his Achilles heel; he could not persuade himself across the glooming spaces underneath the ties. The others coaxed, while he shivered and balked. The aplomb which had carried him through a Wagner lecture before a fashionable audience was wholly lost, and he could not put one foot before the other. At



last Frank bandaged his brother's eyes with his handkerchief, gripped one nerveless arm while Hetty firmly grasped the other, and together they piloted Walter over the gulf.

Thus young Frank's bank account started with his uncle's generous \$100. Frank added a dollar every month, a sum which seemed small to him, and yet it required self-denial to put it aside. The income from his combined undertakings was not large; many of them made no return in money.

In the late summer Walter bought a blue and white "blazer" and, a nineteenth-century troubadour, set off for Bar Harbor. When he came back, he invited Frank and Hetty to his wedding in Washington—in the coming May he hoped to be married to Margaret Blaine, the daughter of the Secretary of State.

Meanwhile there lay before the brothers the innumerable activities of fall and winter. Back in New York, Frank gave four afternoons a week to his classes for teachers, forced to make the course intensive because it must be finished before rehearsals commenced at the Metropolitan. Fortunately he was even nearer the Opera House than in the previous winter; he and Hetty had settled themselves on West Forty-fourth Street, from which he could walk to work in a few minutes. On sunny days, Annie wheeled little Frank, grown very bright and noticing, along Times Square, where in those days baby carriages provoked no stares. That the Damrosches' apartment was on the third floor had seemed an advantage because the house boasted an elevator. But the boast was vain because the Spanish landlord was passionately thrifty and could not endure thinking of the electricity consumed whenever the cage rose or descended through its shaft; he tormented the young Damrosches with reproachful pleas for economy and they walked up and down the flights rather than listen to him,

while they despised their own weakness in yielding their rights.

At the Metropolitan, Seidl had already given all of Wagner's later music dramas except *Parsifal*, which, so far as foreign production went, lay under Cosima Wagner's ban. This was probably the reason for the introduction of Cornelius's *Barbier von Bagdad*, which, although not Wagner's, bore the stamp of Liszt's approval. Leopold Damrosch had been Cornelius's friend, and the young Damrosches felt an almost proprietary interest in the new opera, but it was Seidl and not Walter who was to conduct the Christmas Day première. That winter there was an epidemic of influenza. Kalisch, Lilli Lehmann's husband, came down with it; and on his account the opera was postponed until January 4, 1889. Before the second date, Seidl, too, was ill and must yield the baton to Walter, which caused some natural rejoicing among the Damrosches. At the close of the little opera, Frank conducted the ballet *Die Puppenfee*.

Frank, who seldom had any trouble with the opera personnel, had reason to dislike Theodore Reichmann, the chief acquisition of the year. Reichmann had an untrustworthy intonation and finished the *Song to the Evening Star* in *Tannhäuser* a semitone flat. Since the orchestra were playing in tune, the first effect was not pleasant, but Frank, who was conducting the chorus, winced in anticipation of what would follow when his "pilgrims" began to sing. He had grouped them by fours across the width of the stage from the first entrance to the backdrop; those who stood near Reichmann would inevitably take the false pitch from him, while those near the orchestra would begin a half tone higher. When the chorus began, Frank sang with might and main on the side of the angels—in this case the instrumentalists—but Reichmann's voice had been too persuasive and a dreadful cacophony ensued. Seidl was

furious, Reichmann blamed Frank's chorus, but Seidl was not deceived.

When the season closed, the stockholders again voted to continue German opera, but a spring series of Italian opera, which Abbey and Grau put on at the Metropolitan after the German opera had vacated it, increased the directors' and boxholders' dislike for the more serious type of music they were forced to support. It seemed improbable that German opera would be countenanced after the season of 1889-90; and when Stanton went to Europe, he had instructions to bring home whatever agreeable novelties he could find.

Opera intrigues circled endlessly about Frank without entangling him, but his affection for Walter, whose more prominent position was a pivot for circular attack, caused him a good deal of distress. To champion or to dispraise the younger Damrosch is not germane to this history, but any reader of the papers of that day cannot fail to mark the furious jealousy roused by his marriage into political circles and his intimate relations with the wealthy. His youth, his beauty, and his pride had always been annoying to many less favored. In the spring of 1891, concurrently with the announcement of the Metropolitan directors that the house would be made over to Abbey and Grau for the season of 1891-92, Walter decided to extricate himself from the turmoil, organize his own permanent orchestra, and transfer his sphere of activity to the brilliant purlieus of Carnegie Hall, which Andrew Carnegie had built to his own glory and for the convenience of his young friend.

But Frank was tethered to the Opera House by his salary of \$1,500, without which he could not see his way to supporting Hetty and little Frank. He had arrived at the place where he actively disliked his work. One opera succeeded another with such rapidity that he could not train the chorus into that state of near-perfection short of which

he suffered. In the previous season the principals had announced themselves ready with *Otello*, but he had been forced to put too much time into rehearsing older operas to prepare the chorus. Now that the artists were a mixed cast of German and Italian singers, they could no longer present homogeneous works; some were used to one way of doing *Carmen*, some another, and many of them could not sing in the language of the libretto. He had come to the Metropolitan to help Walter carry on his father's work; for five years the Opera House had been his home because the father had sanctified it; his sons had continued to serve what they considered a sacred cause. Now all was over, German opera thrown out of doors, many well-loved artists had been bundled out along with it, Walter had departed, although unconquered; worse still, the spirit of the father seemed at last defeated—it was as if he died again, because his work had been repudiated.

## CHAPTER VII

### EUROPE REVISITED

(1891-1892)

WHEN THE Metropolitan Opera closed its season in the spring of 1891, Frank Damrosch told himself that his musical education had reached the highest pitch to which, unaided, he could bring it. Since the period of his youthful studies under Ferdinand von Inten, he had been entirely self-taught except for the solitary vocal lesson from Emil Fischer, which shone like a white pebble in the recent past. He had purposefully observed all that the great opera singers did, he had read widely, had thoroughly studied the methods and manuals of European and American teachers; but when he considered that his logical career was that of a music educator, he told himself that a man ought to know immeasurably more than he attempted to teach. In composition he was aware of gaps which, as a conscientious and thorough musician, he refused to bridge over with doubtful harmonies or florid decorations. Probably, in that day when musicologists were few, he did not realize how strong was his inclination to study for the mere love of learning.

There was at that time no master in America with whom he cared to associate himself; the great artists were still birds of passage who came to tour the land of profits and return to the congenial atmosphere of Europe. To get what he wanted, he, too, must go abroad. Had his career turned out according to the vague promise of the 1870's, when he had half-expected to find himself a piano virtuoso, he might have gone to Leschetizky in Vienna. But that phase lay almost fifteen years behind him. He

had come to the place where he did not wholly approve of virtuosos who were nothing more than virtuosos, so strong was his preference for the collective music of chorus or orchestra. In 1891 what he wanted was a teacher of theory and composition, and the man who seemed likeliest to fill his needs was living in Berlin. He was the Pole, Moritz Moszkowski, thirty-seven years old and thus five years Frank's senior. In youth he had been a student at the Stern and Kullak Conservatory, and after Kullak's death, had taught at the renamed Stern Conservatory. Kullak himself had been the pupil of Dehn, with whom Leopold Damrosch had studied composition. Either by intention or by an unconscious tracing of the pattern, Frank, whose life frequently followed lines similar to his father's, chose the city of the elder Damrosch's musical education and a teacher of the same tradition.

The plan for three months' study in Berlin emanated entirely from the younger generation. Walter was actively concerned in the project because he was going himself, not as in former years to secure singers, but to engage instrumentalists for the permanent orchestra which would function under his leadership in Carnegie Hall. It seemed sensible not to speak much of Frank's project to Hetty's uncle, Joseph Mosenthal, because that gentleman, who was himself one of the best-liked and most influential teachers in New York, thought it nonsense for Hetty's husband to travel to Europe in order to put himself under Moritz Moszkowski's tutelage. Further, with his usual discretion, Frank decided to keep the purpose of his journey a secret from the general public, because the musician's need of constant study and research was unrecognized in the nineties, and some crass acquaintance would be sure to marvel and detract when a grown man felt that he required further education.

Neither of the brothers planned to take his wife with

him. For Hetty to stay at home constituted an act of true self-denial, but she agreed with Frank that she ought not to accompany him. Their little boy was only two and a half, not an age to travel so far unless it were really necessary, and Berlin was hot in summer—should she leave the city for a cool resort, Frank would see little of her and that little at the cost of interruption to his studies. Both of them knew the truth of the old saying, "He travels fastest who travels alone." Frank was anxious about Hetty's summer. Therese, the sister of whom she was very fond, would herself be traveling in Europe; but Hetty's mother promised to go with her to either a Long Island cottage or a Gloucester boardinghouse, and until summer was fairly come, Hetty would stay with her people on Eighty-fifth Street. Careful budgeting for the little family was necessary; Frank suggested that his wife should consider \$800 as her summer share, while he hoped to manage on \$3.00 a day exclusive of the expenses of lessons and travel. He tried to impress on Hetty that he did not wish her to practice petty economies. Their secret councils were many and affectionate; each wished the other to be comfortably extravagant.

The brothers sailed on the *Columbia* in company with Andrew Carnegie, whose own party of three would leave the ship at Southampton, the Damrosches continuing on to Hamburg. The relation of the magnate to Walter was much like that between Renaissance patron and youth of genius. Walter was no stranger to the splendor which surrounded the Carnegies, and Frank was rather diverted than awed by it. They ate in the solitary grandeur of the music room, served by the "best" steward: Carnegie remonstrated against such "royal" treatment, but found grace to endure it. Frank thought him "jolly," and liked to pace the deck with him while he smoked. He admired him for being as good a sailor as himself; neither of them



missed a meal. There was nothing of riotous unrestraint about the party, and the most convivial occasion of the voyage was the making of a Welsh rarebit by Walter on a chafing dish which he had hopefully included in his baggage.

Frank had come aboard the *Columbia* in a condition of almost insupportable fatigue. For the first few days he felt it delicious to do nothing but eat and sleep and watch the panorama unroll from the deck before him to the limitless distances. Then he grew restless, missed Hetty acutely, thought how changed his little boy would be when next he saw him, wanted to get to work, and began to look forward eagerly to Berlin routine. He wrote long letters to his wife and, when he realized eleven marks from the ship's pool, set them aside to spend on a cable to her. Walter, who intended to return a month before Frank, had promised to visit the Carnegies at Cluny Castle on his way home; but the elder brother, whom they urged to follow his example, declined, feeling that as he had come for the purpose of study he would do well to finish the term of exile in Berlin. He was already thinking of it as exile.

The lilacs were in bloom when he reached the German capital, each square a huge bouquet, heavy with perfume. Frank stayed at a hotel while he waited for Walter to come from Leipzig, whither he had gone in the hope of securing Adolph Brodsky as concertmaster for his orchestra. At the awaited hour, Frank went to the station to meet his brother's train. He was very glad to see him again and to find him cheerful and exulting in good hopes of Brodsky. Walter knew Mr. Phelps, the American ambassador, and took Frank with him to the Embassy, where they were heartily welcomed and asked to dine. The ambassador's wife was visiting in the States and he was lonely; he suggested that the brothers make his house their headquarters. The Damrosches declined, not without gratitude; they

wished to be independent. Mr. Phelps then urged them to secure lodgings in the neighborhood so that they could lunch and dine with him whenever they chose; as the mails came in, one of his young men would deliver their letters at the *pension* of their choice. He reported to his wife that Frank was "just as nice as Walter."

At their first Embassy dinner, the brothers met Geraldine Morgan, an American violinist, who was living in Berlin with her mother. In New York she had been a pupil of Leopold Damrosch, of whom she spoke with pleasing reverence; she was now the boast of Joachim, with whom she had long been studying, but in the autumn she planned to go home to her own country. After dinner she played for the guests of the ambassador, and the Damrosches listened with delight.

The brothers took rooms in a house which seemed to be a kind of repository for unsold furniture. The proprietor promised to remove from their two chambers all but the essential pieces and honorably did so, and yet it seemed to Frank that everything was comfortless and dusty. He was paying more than he liked, partly because Walter was at the time indisposed and unable to climb the stairs to the third stories where people in their circumstances usually found comfortable lodging. In his cheerful letter to Hetty he made the most of the height of their apartments, giving as his guess seventeen feet, and as long as he had to endure it, he kept secret the extraordinary vileness of the morning coffee. According to Berlin custom, other meals were taken outside in restaurant or café. In the matter of a piano he was in luck, because Bechstein, the manufacturer, made him a present of a good upright for as long as he should stay.

He called immediately upon Moszkowski, whom he found living with his pretty Parisian wife in a large and elegant apartment: he came of a rich family and was popu-

lar as a pianist as well as much sought after for his teaching. To Frank he was all that was amiable, called him "colleague," explaining that between colleagues there could be no question of fees paid and received. Frank did not like the idea of free lessons, and protested as strongly as was compatible with politeness. When he yielded, it was with a silent determination to buy Moszkowski as handsome a gift as Berlin offered. Wednesday was set as the lesson day and four o'clock as the hour. Moszkowski showed tact and sympathy in apprehending Frank's position, which Frank explained in his straightforward way: he could not afford to waste time on what he knew already, but must go on from the point of musical maturity which he had been able to reach by himself. An exercise in double counterpoint was assigned; when Frank brought in the required work, he had added a canon, which Moszkowski received with amazement, expressing himself as unable to comprehend how Damrosch had accomplished so much without instruction. Frank proceeded from canon to fugue, then to sonata form. He wrote Hetty that he was glad he was old enough to appreciate his luck. Moszkowski never stinted the time he gave, often protracting the lesson to an hour and a half, or to two hours. He had a reputation for indifference, but to Frank he was always amiable and helpful.

At their first Embassy dinner the brothers had learned from Geraldine Morgan something of Joachim's affairs. Shortly after their arrival they heard his string quartet at one of the series of Tonkünstler concerts, and afterward visited his apartment. The weather was hot, but the third floor suite was pleasantly airy. Frank had never seen so long a flat; it stretched back in a string of rooms from one street to a garden on the next block. The old friend of his father seemed to him less venerable than five years ago, and he wrote Hetty that "the king of violinists" looked

quite young in spite of his massive appearance. It was a title thoughtfully bestowed; even in an informal letter to Hetty he would praise or censure in musical matters only as he believed his judgment just.

The Tonkünstler concerts disappointed Frank, who went so far as to call the course "a fraud," but he acknowledged Joachim's quartet to be the best in Europe and cheerfully excepted Lilli Lehmann's achievements from his strictures.

After Lilli's performance, Walter and he had gone back to greet her and had been urged to come to Grünewald, where she lived with her husband, Paul Kalisch. She told them what train to take, but failed to describe or locate her house; and when they reached the station, and were confronted by a whole settlement of villas in pretty gardens, they were temporarily baffled. After a moment's thought, they started out along a country road, whistling *Leitmotifs* from the *Nibelungen Ring*. As they had hoped, Lilli's beautiful voice soon sang in answer, and they saw her rush impetuously down a path to fling wide the garden gate. She was very proud of her house and showed them every corner. It was, Frank thought, the queerest possible mixture of German and American cottage styles, but it was certainly cozy and Lilli liked it. She and her husband studied all day, scarcely ever went to town, and lived plainly, almost frugally, as supper presently proved, although she brought out champagne to mark the celebration. When train time neared, Paul and Lilli, who seemed happy and companionable, walked to the station with the brothers. Frank came again more than once to the house in Grünewald. On the last visit, Lilli had tremendous news for him; she was coming to America, they would meet once more in the old scenes of the Metropolitan Opera House; she had signed a contract with Grau for \$1,000 for each of thirty-two performances.

Marcella Sembrich, who was about Frank's age and

fifteen years younger than Lilli Lehmann, was then singing with great success in Berlin summer opera. Hearing her in *Lakmé*, Frank pronounced her incompetent to act so dramatic a role, although he admitted that her vocalizing was lovely; but when he went to *The Daughter of the Regiment*, he thought her superb, and was lost in amused admiration at the clever way she beat her drum. He was introduced on the street to her husband, who had been her piano teacher, and Herr Stengel courteously invited him to call on his wife. Thus encouraged, he visited Sembrich's dressing room, where she received him amiably and gave him a rose which he carried to his room and characteristically put in a vase in front of his wife's photograph.

While Walter stayed in Berlin, he went with him almost every evening to the opera, concert, or theater, making the most of the time because he knew he would not enjoy the theater when Walter had gone. He heard three operas of Weber, liked the choruses of *Die drei Pintos*, thought *Abu Hassan* melodious and very amusing, had never seen a better sunset than that which *Oberon* provided. *Cavalleria Rusticana* was then a startling novelty. He wrote Hetty that it had won the prize for a young Italian composer in a competition with one hundred seventy entries. As music, he considered it weak; but emotionally, it was poignant in the extreme. It was brutal—not vulgar—and such a theme demanded brutal treatment. He saw it again, could not approve, but did not condemn. It interested him little as music, but as drama he found it enthralling; yet it belonged to a part of life with which he felt he had nothing to do.

He had settled to a routine of work, not, indeed without interruptions, because he and his brother had many friends and relations in Berlin, but the morning hours were seldom invaded and he rose early, being at his desk by eight o'clock. At one he took a two-hour recess for the pleasantly protracted Berlin luncheon, and went back to work,

when possible, until eight in the evening. Walter and he had discovered a little uncle, half brother to their father, whom they nicknamed Uncle "Juju." He lived in a flat with two diminutive old sisters, who collected black figurines and decorated mantel, walls, and tables with photographs of American Damrosches. Uncle "Juju" wrote occasional verse and adored his nephews. When his little old sisters went for a holiday to the Harz Mountains, he stayed in Berlin in order to be always ready to go out with his young relations.

June 22 was Frank's thirty-second birthday. He bought himself a present from his wife—a pipe with a porcelain bowl decorated with the head of Frederick William IV. It was an economical purchase which cost only the equivalent of eighty-four cents; he was trying to keep his expenses down. He missed Hetty even more than usual, and she had written him that their little boy was using long words—"otherwise," for example—it was a pity to miss this stage of his babyhood. Walter, who knew the consequence his elder brother placed on birthdays, had been wonderfully thoughtful. When Frank came down to breakfast, a beautiful cake garlanded with cherries and roses occupied the center of the table, and Walter had bought him a fine print of Beethoven—would see to having it framed as soon as he was back in New York. That night he gave a dinner for Frank, just the two of them and little Uncle "Juju," but a fine meal with champagne. On the whole it was a good birthday. Frank knew that he was greatly loved. Every steamer brought a long letter from Hetty and, even in their separation, he had with him touching and funny little evidences of her wifely anxiety to have him well and comfortable. It was she who wanted him to have a suit made in Berlin, she gave instructions about the purchase of underwear, she had been firm about his bringing the heavy ulster. In his baggage she had

insinuated a certain strip of flannel to which she attributed magical properties; when Walter had a cold, he wore the talisman and magnanimously asserted that it had cured him in a single day.

The brothers had many simple and delightful adventures. They went one day to the Tiergarten and found it swarming with old soldiers in faded uniforms: some women's patriotic or charitable society was giving a fete for the Invaliden. Walter picked out two of the veterans and invited them to share a bottle of wine with him and his brother. One was a sergeant with stories of campaigning in wars which they could vaguely remember in their childhood and which seemed very long ago. The four sat at a table under the trees with the dappled sunshine falling through the green leaves on the thick glasses, on the gnarled hands which held them—and on the smooth, beautiful hands of youth. The old soldiers enjoyed the wine and liked to be listened to: the brothers thought how pleasant it all was, and told themselves that they, too, would be old some day—some very distant day.

When Walter left Berlin, Frank moved to a room in a quieter part of town. It was less expensive, but it was cleaner, the coffee proved excellent, and he had an enormous window, fifteen feet across. He learned that Hetty and her mother had gone to Gloucester. When she returned to New York after the height of summer, she intended to hunt an apartment. Frank wrote that whatever she chose would suit him, and expressed a pleasing if fallacious confidence that, if he could pay \$1,000 a year, he could pay \$1,200. The letters which passed between them revealed a mutual confidence, intense affection, and a fervent desire to share experiences.

But there was one experience which, even to please Hetty, he refused to repeat. He would not buy her a jacket in Berlin. He had attended her sister Therese on a shopping expe-



dition and had been embarrassed and uncomfortable. "The thing Therese got was simply awful," he wrote, but added grudgingly that after Therese had supervised various alterations, it looked "all right." He was indignant at learning that the shops had a special price for foreign shoppers. His impression of the Fatherland was far less complimentary than the one he had formed in 1886. "No country for me," he wrote Hetty. "I hate it and I dislike the people, their ways, and nearly everything I see and hear." The climate distressed him, the Berlin haircut was an abomination, he had heard third-rate concerts which a New York public would not have tolerated. In more serious mood he expressed his considered opinion: "Give me our free and liberal political institutions which with all the corruption among the officials, are still vastly more moral in their effects upon the nation than the demoralizing influence of the 'paternal' government upon its 'children.' And finally, and above all, give me our social institutions in which man meets man as *equal* until one has *proved* his superior strength of intellect or other talents to be better than another; in which man meets *woman* as equal so that it depends mainly on herself what position she is to take in life, in society."

Yet he had many friends and colleagues in Berlin who had received him cordially. His loneliness, especially after Walter went away, fails to account for his downright dislike of Germany. As far as is known, he had met with no snubs; indeed, he was never the kind of man who is repulsed—he was at once too dignified, too modest. But he had become completely the American, even to the American's comfortable belief that no other country breeds such lovely women: whenever he saw a pretty, discreet and well-dressed girl, he was sure she was from the States. He had first landed in New York on August 5, 1871, and had formed a habit of annually remembering with quiet grati-

tude his father's wisdom in bringing his children to the United States; this year, which completed the twentieth since the Damrosch entry, a warmer sense of benefits conferred by the founders of his house, of privileges which were his because its children were citizens of a free country, pervaded a mind unusually capable of patriotic feeling.

He planned to spend a week in late July at Bayreuth, and Moszkowski good-naturedly agreed to fit the missed lesson into the succeeding week. Frank traveled by Breslau, where he called upon family friends, and arrived in Bayreuth weary from a night journey. Like everything else in Germany, Bayreuth sank to a lower place than he had given it in 1886. His own standards had been raised by his long experience at the Metropolitan, and in the meantime Bayreuth's had deteriorated. Frau Wagner was trying to save money and took on cheap singers, either young and well trained but inexperienced, or professionals who were old and past their best work. No longer would he think of Bayreuth as the model for musicians. Only amateurs and tourists could be deceived much longer. *Tannhäuser* at Bayreuth in 1891, while he would have thought it "pretty good for New York," was "damned bad" as a pattern set up for the musical world to follow. Frank's favorite, perhaps his only, expletive was *damned*, written d—d; but on so dire an occasion as the performance of *Tannhäuser* he felt constrained to write out every letter. After he had heard *Parsifal* in 1886, he had wanted to get away from everyone and prolong in solitude an intense spiritual experience; but in 1891, he went logically from the performance to a café for beer and professional conversation. Poor intonation of the woodwinds had marred the tender beauty of the prelude, the rhythm had been ragged, and he was left with no sense of the consecrated.

The cause of so much dissatisfaction lay in his conviction that music had moral implications. He had come to

regard art with an austere reverence, and would tolerate nothing less than the ultimate degree of perfection possible to the performer. With children and with the untaught of any age, his patience was exemplary, but he had none with the artist who gave anything but his best. For such a one to give less was, in his view, actual sin.

Yet opera at Bayreuth had its attendant and unspoiled delights. The town was full of charming, well-behaved Americans; the English language, which he had learned and loved, was spoken all around him; the place was wonderfully quaint; and Walter, the good companion, was with him. He told Hetty that he and his brother seldom needed to discuss a matter, because in almost everything, "We both desire the same results."

Walter was eminently the more social. He had done his duty in calling upon Frau Cosima Wagner, who did her own by sending him a card for a grand reception at Wahnfried. Frank had not paid his respects; he did not like to take the initiative in such cases; and as a result was without an invitation. But Walter insisted that he ought to go; in so large a crowd a stray, unlooked-for guest would not be noticed, and Cosima would certainly have invited him had she known of his existence. So at nine of an evening the brothers, each in his dress suit, white carnation in buttonhole, betook themselves to Wahnfried, where Frau Tode, one of Frau Wagner's daughters, received them. They did not approach her regal mother, who was surrounded by countesses, archdukes, and princesses glittering with jewels and orders. Cosima, Frank noted, was very like her father Liszt; she was attenuated, tall and stooped, with a beak of a nose and an air of extreme distinction. The walls of the great salon were Pompeian red, with golden candelabra springing from them at regular intervals. The room was three stories high, with a skylight in the dim ceiling, and a gallery running around all four sides.

In the center of the floor stood a grand piano where a violinist and pianist were playing Beethoven's Sonata in F. Frank wandered into the library and marveled at the fine editions, the frescoed walls, and Cosima's many portraits standing about on easels; he saw one fine painting of Wagner. He refused the ice, the cakes, the claret punch—after all, he had not been properly invited—and went away with Walter to drink beer in a café.

Walter went on to take his ship at Hamburg, and Frank returned to his work in Berlin. Before they parted, he had agreed to write the Carnegies that he would be free to come to them on the twentieth of August. His original refusal had sprung from a wish not to desert Moszkowski until Moszkowski deserted him, and it seems probable that the change of plan arose from the approaching departure of the master.

Frank had three weeks left him in which to study. During their passage he enjoyed a very pleasant social experience, an entrance into the circle of German scholars which he had heard was less accessible than that of the highest aristocracy. At the American ambassador's he had met Baron Georg von Bunsen, the somewhat elderly son of that von Bunsen who had been ambassador to England and an intimate friend of King Frederick William IV, a cousin too of the famous chemist. Presently Herr von Bunsen called upon Frank, who, greatly surprised at hearing what an important visitor waited below, in confusion hung away a pair of trousers just back from the cleaner's and thrust the sonata on which he was working into his portfolio. The Baron stayed a long time. Frank enjoyed hearing him talk about Wagner and Bayreuth, but, after he had gone, felt a little apprehensive over the prospect of breakfasting next day with the von Bunsen family. He had always undervalued his own charm, partly because he was more silent than the rest of his family, and he was

half afraid that he had imposed upon the scholarly old fellow. He wrote Hetty that he hoped the Baron would "not be disappointed when he finds that I am not a genius, but an ordinary mortal with just about common sense enough to make me know when to hold my tongue."

The von Bunsens lived in a sequestered little settlement of whose existence in Berlin he had been wholly ignorant. The houses were imposing, and the large gardens in that first week of August were bright with dahlias and the later varieties of roses. A rapid glance informed him that the von Bunsens lived in the finest residence of all. He was not at all afraid of musicians, though there were some he revered, and neither wealth nor title had power to awe him, but von Bunsen was a literary man and a scientist, and his young daughter, who had been with him at the Embassy, was terrifyingly brilliant. He soon saw, however, that the family seemed to like him very much. There was a subdued frail English wife and a not-so-talkative little daughter; the luncheon, which they called breakfast, was excellent, with his favorite cherries in a pudding, and he had nothing to regret except that Hetty was not with him to enjoy it. He wrote her that the privilege of meeting such people almost reconciled him to Europe: "We must have quite a number of such men too, only we are so engrossed in our own paths and vocations, that we neglect opportunities of meeting them."

This was the first time Frank had come in contact with people of broad, general culture who were not in any sense specialists, and he took rather a wistful pleasure in the acquaintance. In later life he would know many such, but he was as yet not only too busy but too shy to seek them out. He had liked Germany better while Walter was with him; had Hetty been his companion, he would have been more tolerant of the customs of the country.

One of these observances had hovered over him all sum-

mer like a dreadful portent: if he dined at a private house and after dinner the cook should take up her stand in the doorway, it would mean only one thing; he must walk up to her, compliment her cookery, and present her with two marks. The ceremony struck him as indecently public. If he could only step into the hall on the pretext of getting his hat, dart into the kitchen and surreptitiously deposit the two marks beside the sink, he could bear it better, could even bring himself to mutter, "Fine dinner!" Each time he dined at a friend's house, he worried in anticipation, but only once did a cook make her dreaded entrance; unfortunately it was then early in the summer, so that he had the longer to dread a repetition.

August was half over when he sailed from Hamburg to Leith, where the ship docked late at night. The commotion of unloading began at once. Frank's head had ached for hours. He thought he would rather dress and go to a hotel than lie there and listen to the noise and confusion. The poor place he found near the harbor afforded him snatches of pained slumber, but he was up early and soon on his way to Edinburgh, where he spent part of a day wandering about the old town, full of romantic memories of books he had read and tales long since told him of Mary Stuart and the Douglas.

The Carnegies were expecting him at Cluny Castle. There he went shooting with a small party of visitors, attended by three gamekeepers, six dogs, and a pony with saddlebags stuffed with an excellent cold luncheon. The wise guest went early to bed at Castle Cluny, where a bagpipe broke the peace of morning—not spontaneous music but the result of a little business arrangement between piper and owner. A colonel came to dinner in kilts, a white dress shirt, and a dress coat minus tails. Frank marveled to see him across the table; though above he looked like all the rest of them, what the cloth hid was something

quite irrelevant. The Scotch colonel had fought in the Crimean War and told tales of deeds which had had their place in history almost forty years—not so far from a hundred now.

Frank said thanks and good-by to the Carnegies and made for Southampton and home, where Hetty showed him with pride a small boy who had been constantly reminded that he had a father. At the Opera House the new season passed drearily, while he did his work conscientiously, knowing that it was unrecognized and wretchedly paid: every time she sang, Lilli Lehmann received an amount equal to two thirds of his year's salary.

When summer came again, he took his family to Newport, where he had been engaged to teach singing to a class of wealthy society women. He was patient with them, because they did the best they could—which was not well, since they could not read music; but he played the piano and they exercised their voices with satisfaction to themselves. If he could ever afford to leave the Opera, he would not be content to occupy himself with such trifling work; he had better plans and larger hopes for that desired freedom.

Suddenly, while he was still at Newport, the troublesome problem of the Opera was settled once for all by that notorious workman who dropped a lighted match on the stage of the Metropolitan. Before noon \$300,000 worth of damage had been done. Contracts with the personnel were speedily canceled, and Frank was out of employment. In a holiday spirit and with a sense of immense relief, he set about building a sphere of activity congenial to his talents and ambition.



## CHAPTER VIII

### LET THE PEOPLE SING: PART I

(1892-1894)

IN THE CAREER of the productive man, a critical phase may be looked for when he attains the early thirties. In the ordinary course, he has by this time completed his apprenticeship, assured himself of a means of support, and founded a family. After a laborious struggle through the undergrowth of circumstance, he has emerged into a clearing and the light, drawn his relieved breath, rejoiced to feel his strength, and, with an exultant but a cautious glance, determined on his further path. This is the testing moment: his mature vigor and his intellectual powers are now measured against the responsibilities which he, as a human being, has assumed; will those responsibilities absorb all that vigor, that intellect? will a surplus of energy remain with which he may mark on the world his enduring, individual stamp?

Frank Damrosch had arrived at such a moment in the summer of 1892. His years at the Metropolitan and his late European studies had completed the foundation of his career. Already his record was honorable and, as preparation, uncommonly appropriate, but he felt that, when everything possible had been said, it remained only prologue to the act. The 1880's had been his time of apprenticeship, a time for storing up of knowledge, impressions, skills: the 1890's would prove the use he could make of his training; what could he contribute to the enrichment of the human spirit?

He was uncommonly fortunate in his ability to estimate both his powers and the direction of his aims. The quiet

confidence of his bearing revealed his assurance of strength equal to the road of his choice. He would not limit himself to a bypath, for his acquired knowledge of the world convinced him that there were many ways leading to art's altar. He had grown in the ten or a dozen years since he had feared that New York was not large enough for more than the merest handful of first-rate musicians. As to the goal set before him, whither led all paths which were fit for his feet to travel, that was nothing less than the musical regeneration of mankind.

Mankind is, however, a vague concept; and he was a practical young man who realized that he had to work with groups comprised of individuals, each of whom felt his own infinite importance to himself. The question was, where in the complexity of American society should Frank Damrosch begin?

His acquaintance with this complex American society was of unusual breadth, ranging geographically from the Atlantic to the Rockies, and in the more usual human sense from Vanderbilts and Carnegies to the ballet girls of the opera and the poor immigrants of the lower East Side. Through the social workers who brought their problems to Dr. Adler, he had gained a deeper knowledge of the working classes than could be gleaned from their appearance when he conducted a concert for their benefit. His abortive ventures into business had taught him much of the dealings of employer with employed, had given him some understanding of the painful efforts necessary to secure a bare subsistence, of how slender a margin of time remained, beyond what the exigent task devoured, for pleasure and recreation of the jaded spirit. One who had walked New York's pavements in an errand-boy's shoes was unlikely, in his maturity, to be indifferent to those thousands of young toilers who, unlike him, had nothing to look forward to, at home or in the indefinite future.

At the other extreme of society, he knew many men and women of great wealth, of whom some were sincere music lovers, and others considered music as a means toward further ends, humanitarian or merely snobbish. Among music lovers he could now count his twenty ladies of the Newport summer colony who had been singing two seasons under his rueful guidance. But now his attitude toward them had altered: he no longer thought of them as idle, bored amateurs, for when he had refused to teach them after their return to New York unless they would begin all over again and learn to read notes, they had joyfully assented to his condition. "Singing has become the chief happiness of our lives—" it was modestly and simply said, and thenceforth he accepted them as sisters, worthy of the best he could give them.

But at the same time, he was oppressed by the painful contrast between these pampered daughters of luxury and the boys and girls of sweatshops and factories. He knew a drab tenement house on Forsyth Street, where one of Dr. Adler's helpers, Charles Stover, was making a pioneer effort at settlement work. The basement provided a kindergarten for babies of working mothers; children were allowed to have their games there in the evening—through the day their wretched playground was the cobblestones. Stover and a few friends were, as Frank knew, agitating for more parks and recreation grounds in the slum districts, but were having a hard and uphill fight.

Impressed by such conditions and the noble efforts to ameliorate them, Frank Damrosch came to believe that he, too, had the duty and, quite as important, the ability to improve the condition of the "working classes." He held it self-evident that Providence had not deprived the poor folk of New York of musical endowment, since all humanity shared the gift in some degree; it waited only to be aroused and developed. Certainly, the masses could

not afford to attend many concerts, or to play upon instruments; but the gift of song was of an ordained freedom and, if music had become the chief joy of his Newport ladies, to what high Paradise would it admit the city's unfortunates?

The idea of a singing class composed of just such people opened up tremendous possibilities. If he could hold their interest until they had mastered the rudiments, they might in a year or two be capable of singing choral masterpieces, of invading the province of the Oratorio Society. Let them give a concert or two, and there would be plenty of new adherents; the movement would grow and spread like the wonderful East Indian tree, the banyan.

Such a movement could not be launched without proper organization and support. He needed expert advice from men in close touch with the masses. The financial aspect perplexed him, for though he intended to give his own services, some money would be needed for the purchase of music and if the class met, as it doubtless would, in Cooper Union, the trustees were obliged to ask a small rental when lessons were given which were not absolutely without cost to the pupils. Mrs. Vanderbilt said she would gladly carry all expenses, but he was of the opinion that it would be wise to do without financial aid from philanthropists.

He took his problems to Charles Stover, the obvious man to counsel him, being, as he knew, fully aware of the potential value of art in underprivileged lives. Love of music had already bridged the chasm between two natures, singularly unlike. Stover had been brought up in rigid Presbyterianism, and intending himself for the ministry, had graduated from Union Theological Seminary, only to lose his boyhood faith in the course of further studies in Germany. He was for a time certain of little except that men were miserable and ought to be made less so. He was

given to somber moods, and a sense of sin darkened his blameless life.

After his return from Europe and his repudiation by the orthodox of his former belief, he had been persuaded to undertake the administration of certain model tenements maintained by the Society for Ethical Culture. He was now living in such a tenement on Forsyth Street, not a new dwelling but one of good proportions, which had in old days possessed a claim to elegance but was now noisy, crowded, and comfortless. Charles Stover lived and worked in the two rooms on the first floor, where at his roll-top desk he planned crusades for municipal improvements, writing manifestoes, proclamations, and petitions in excellent English and a fair contentment of spirit.

He took an immediate interest in Frank's scheme, as he did in all which were designed to better man—although he loved music, the fact that this was primarily musical was of minor importance to him. The better to canvass the subject, he summoned three of his intimate collaborators, of whom Edward King, the Scotch labor leader, was at that time the most influential, if only through the argument of years, for the others were young and he was already in the middle forties. As a boy, King had worked in the Edinburgh Public Library and had somehow found time to do an amazing deal of reading. An earnest, persuasive speaker, he neglected his own worldly progress in doing good to others, especially among the young Jews who had escaped from Russian pogroms.

Two young Harvard graduates completed the impromptu committee: John M. Goodale, a lawyer, and James K. Paulding, a settlement worker and member of the Social Reform Club. The idea of a "People's" singing class appealed to all of them, though all but Frank were motivated more by humanitarian than by artistic considerations. Stover and King remarked with satisfaction that Mr. Dam-

rosch himself was not concentrating on music alone, but seemed devoted to "the higher interests of the wage-earner." Their juniors, Goodale and Paulding, liked Mr. Damrosch and foresaw an interesting experiment in human organization. If there were doubts concerning discipline—a previous attempt to teach singing in Cooper Union had failed because of "disputes" between teachers and pupils—Mr. Damrosch's quiet and dignified appearance was sufficient to dispel them.

Edward King's advice was to keep the singing class a strictly People's movement. He promised the support of the trade unions, provided it was kept clear of any odor of charity. All were agreed, as Frank had anticipated, that the project should be financially self-supporting: poor people neither enjoyed nor benefited by a charity which threatened to pauperize them. King wisely suggested that a mass meeting be called and a vote formally taken on the means of financing the class. The fact that the outcome of the vote was among them a foregone conclusion did not lessen its importance.

Frank tactfully left the details to the men whom he had succeeded in interesting. It was decided to set a member's fee of ten cents for each meeting—the little sum was as much as could be asked of the average worker, who might also have carfare to pay. In order to make it sufficient, the membership must be large—a class of fifty would not be able to pay its own overhead. Frank did not want boys under eighteen or girls under fifteen (later changed to sixteen), but these were the only limitations. No one was too old; race and color were of no significance. If too many came, he knew he could find assistants among the public school teachers who had taken his lecture course.

It was exceedingly important that everyone should keep a sense of freedom—the singing class was not to be a cage to imprison potential songbirds. Someone thought up an

appropriate slogan: "Easy to get in and easy to get out," which gave courage to the shy and promised the fickle that he need not stay if he were bored. Sunday was, of necessity, the day appointed for the meetings. It was the only day on which the masses had a private life.

No one asked Frank Damrosch what he expected to get out of the singing class. He would exchange his free Sunday afternoons for certain intangibles whose value he alone could judge; but when he was questioned about what *people* got out of music, he said quietly, "I think, personally, that music is the greatest giver of comfort and happiness in life." He wanted them to read notes because notes were what he called "the key to the storehouse," and he explained that he chose to teach them how to sing instead of how to play for two good reasons; it cost them less money, and it meant that they could benefit *immediately*, in *chorus*. He believed as much as the men at Forsyth Street in "the higher interests of the wage-earner," and he knew that singing *together* made men better citizens.

Charles Stover devoted his energies to the preparatory work, answering inquiries and writing letters. Frank wrote in part the call to the workers and affixed his signature, but J. K. Paulding and Edward King assisted in drawing it up and contributed the paragraphs relating to organization. They met with an insignificant but baffling difficulty: How could the classes be called "free" when a charge of ten cents was made? To call them "cheap" would be disgusting and false; but the point was sure to arouse criticism. The difficulty was evaded by "practically free," but this trifling discrepancy between fact and practice was, as they foresaw, seized upon by opponents of the movement and detractors who ignored the truism that free libraries, free schools, free hospitals are supported either by taxation or by philanthropy, and that everything in this world must be paid for by someone.

The proclamation ran as follows:



## TO THE WORKING PEOPLE OF NEW YORK:

Recognizing the fact that music contributes more than any other art to brighten and beautify our lives, and that it is the art which can be practiced by the greatest number of people, since nature has furnished nearly every person with a correct ear and a singing voice, I have decided to open a course of lessons in reading music and choral singing.

It is my purpose to teach everyone who desires to learn, to read music from notes, and I hope ultimately to form from the members of these classes a grand People's Chorus that shall be able to sing the greatest works of the greatest masters.

The classes shall be practically free, the small fee of 10 cents a lesson going only towards paying for the rent of the hall and such incidental expenses as may be necessary to the proper maintenance of the classes. There will be no extra charge for music, or books of any kind. If there should be a surplus in the treasury at the end of the first season, it will be placed to the credit of a fund for the future development and enlargement of these classes. My own services and the services of all officers assisting me in the management will be given free.

All persons desiring to become members should send their names and addresses to the General Secretary, Edward King, No. 146 Forsyth Street, so that there may be no delay in preparing their membership cards.

The regular lessons will be given every Sunday afternoon in large hall, Cooper Union, at 4 o'clock, until further notice, beginning October 23, 1892.

No male applicant under eighteen years of age, and no female applicant under fifteen, will be admitted.

FRANK DAMROSCH

On the reverse side of the sheet were the general rules for governing the assembly. Supreme power was vested in Mr. Damrosch, who could, if he chose, decide against admitting any applicant. This was probably to safeguard the chorus against an invasion by an army of monotones, but so far as is known the director never exercised his

prerogative. Disorderly behavior was to result in instant dismissal. Those who became members were expected to be faithful through the year, and a rebate of \$1.00 was guaranteed to every chorister who had perfect attendance during the season.

There had never been anything like it. Young people attending classes at Cooper Union read the circular, discussed it among themselves and with the family at home. The prestige of the Damrosch name, the influence of Edward King, were potent with the young East Side intellectuals. Those who were not attracted by the idea of learning to sing wanted some nice place to go on Sunday afternoons, now that it was too late for the beaches. The young folk did not dislike the idea of paying; their meager earnings could seldom be spent except upon necessities, and it was fun to buy pleasure, if it did not cost any terrifying amount. Those who liked to hear music, or fancied they could sing, were the more eager for Sunday's arrival. Some of them had seen Mr. Damrosch conduct at the Workingman's School, yet, out of the number reached by the little proclamation, pitifully few had been to any concerts. There were then no phonographs nor radios, and the East Siders seldom wandered far from their crowded quarter; few had ventured to Central Park to hear the occasional band concerts. Those who had listened to the tender and melancholy folk-songs brought by their mothers from distant lands were half ashamed of all Old Country ways.

A preliminary meeting was held October 16, at which Frank explained the aims of the movement and invited those present to appear a week later for instruction. On the twenty-third, he played the organ at Chickering Hall, ate his dinner, and leaving little Frank—who had grown to the age when a father would like to spend a Sunday afternoon at home—with the good Annie, hurried off with

Hetty to Cooper Union. There he was amazed to see an immense crowd surging from one side of the street to the other. It was natural to suppose that they had found the doors locked and were waiting to get in, but when he made his way through the press, he found the hall overflowing. The resourceful Edward King, named as General Secretary in the proclamation, admitted the impossibility of dealing immediately with so great a number; as nearly as could be determined, two thousand people had come with the intention of joining the class, while the seating capacity of the large hall was not above seven hundred.

Frank stepped to the platform and told the audience what he hoped to do: he was going to teach them to read notes so that in due time they would be able to sing the choral compositions of the great masters. Everyone could understand his simple and direct language; everyone could feel hopeful and proud at the thought of what lay before him, if he came regularly to the class. Mr. Damrosch said that the fee of ten cents depended on the vote of the class; he could get the money elsewhere, but if the members preferred to be independent, the admission charge would be sufficient to pay expenses. He did not disguise his wish to have the project self-supporting, and the good-humored and docile crowd voted unanimously for the entrance fee. This settled, he promised to meet them next Sunday at three o'clock. The room emptied, the waiting applicants were admitted from the street, and the procedure was repeated. A show of hands determined how many had previously learned to read music; those who admitted the accomplishment were regretfully requested to stay away. As it was, Frank realized that the unexpectedly large number would require double-time work: two classes, one meeting at three o'clock and the other at four.

Next Sunday afternoon Frank gave his first lesson to the People's Singing Classes. He noticed, now that he

had time to study their faces, that there were present more women than men—in the proportion of three to two as nearly as he could gauge—that the greater number were young, although time- and work-worn men and women were not lacking—and that the girls looked very pretty in their Sunday dresses, and the young men unnaturally neat in their best. Some of the members were colored, and every country of Europe seemed to be represented—Russia, Ireland, England, Scotland, Wales, Poland; there were some from Italy, and many more from Germany.

Mr. Damrosch sang the scale to the class, asked the class to sing it back to him, pointed out the intervals, wrote the notes on the blackboard. Everyone worked with all his might. At last, Mr. Damrosch said he would let them have the reward they deserved. He reversed the blackboard from which they had been singing the scale, and on the clean side wrote a simple tune; it was the round *Oh, how lovely is the evening*. As he pointed out the notes, they sang in unison. Then he wrote the words of the little song in three lines beneath the staff. They sang them with renewed delight. "To get the full effect," said Mr. Damrosch, "it must be sung as a round." This puzzled them, and their attention grew painfully strained, while he divided them into three sections, assigning one line to each. The first section sang with scared voices, the second added their line with commendable boldness, but the third shouted. It is not easy to put into words the effect their first song had upon the happy singers; the simple words and dulcet melody evoked uncertain images of wide sky and swinging bell, the Angelus, and tranquil sunlit fields. Now they had read music, and sung it, and all had been *together*. They straggled out, a little dazed with such success. A wiseacre started the rumor that they had not actually made all those melodious sounds; Mr. Damrosch had brought down opera singers and concealed them in the crowd.

The hall cleared except for the newly formed executive committee, which assumed the management of all class affairs except those relating directly to music. The first important task was the division of classes, a labor requiring the assistance of the director, who did not as a rule take any action in matters coming before this committee. Before Christmas two subsidiary classes were organized on the East Side under able women teachers chosen by Frank from his list of potential assistants. Sara L. Dunning, who assumed charge of the class at Eighty-sixth Street and Third Avenue, was already an accomplished musician when he had met her eight years before in Lexington; she was the first graduate of Hosea Holt's Summer School. Frank's other assistant was Sara J. J. McCaffery, a big, cordial public school principal, and, like Frank and Miss Dunning, Holt's devoted follower. She had belonged to Frank's classes for teachers and was his enthusiastic partisan.

The leading newspapers sent reporters to the mass meeting and to early lessons at Cooper Union. Long and favorable comment followed, with special credit given to the self-denying spirit of the leader. The critic of the New York *Times* expressed his gratification at the formation of a volunteer chorus which might, he thought, eventually result in festivals such as those of Leeds, Birmingham, and Worcester in England. He pointed out that choral singing was not natural to native Americans and that prior to Mr. Damrosch's efforts, choral clubs had limited their membership to those who could already sing at sight; it was to be hoped that the new group, starting without knowledge but with genuine interest, would have a natural growth similar to musical development in Europe.

Fifty years ago, the masses were seldom mentioned without patronage: the *Times* critic congratulated Mr. Damrosch on providing them "with a form of amusement and of social intercourse which would be at once refreshing to

the mind and beneficial to the manners." Not long after, a writer in the *Musical Courier* snobbishly observed, "We have not the slightest objection to these good, far-away people opening their throats in Cooper Union or in summer parks."

Mr. Damrosch was, indeed, doing his best to lead these "good, far-away people toward gentler channels of thought"; but he did not treat them as if they belonged to a different species. His manner with them was as courteous, and more encouraging, than with the Musurgia, a society with pretensions to real elegance which he began that year to conduct. Young as he still was, it might be said of him that he was fatherly; the little girls of the PSC adored him, and their lovers were not jealous. And truly "forms of amusement and of social intercourse" grew out of the classes; boys and girls became acquainted and walked home together, little intimate groups formed for practicing the lessons, and in many large, poor families, where but one could afford to pay the fee of ten cents, the lucky class member taught the children at home. For those who attended the PSC, Sunday shone like a scarlet poppy against the drab background of the working week. In the dark, crowded city, in the basement hall of Cooper Union where squat pillars half hid the platform, so that necks must be craned to see Mr. Damrosch's gestures, where gas-jets flared and bodies sitting close together heated the chill damp, even there were dwellers in Arcady; even there were those who, like Frank's father in Posen long ago, "visited places hitherto unknown."

Spring came, and the class lived toward the concert—the first, great concert in Carnegie Hall, which had been completed only two years ago and was still wonderfully fresh and brilliant. The performance was to take the place of the regular lesson on Sunday afternoon, May 28, 1893.

The girls planned to wear white dresses; the men would


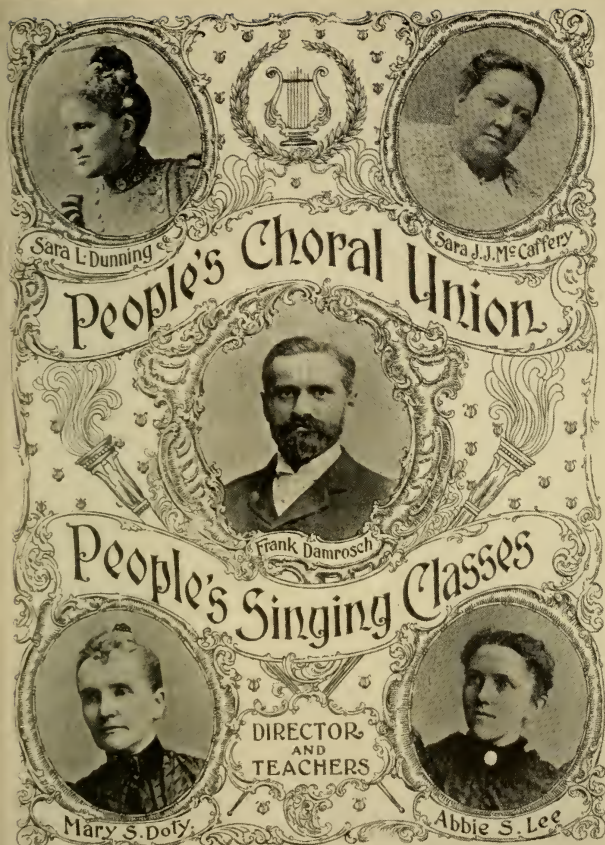


make themselves spruce. Not everyone could sit on the stage, since it would hold no more than five hundred seventy-five, and this meant grievous disappointment for the rest, although chairs were promised close to the platform. One of the pleasantest prospects was the opportunity to sing to friends and families; for the price of seats began at fifteen cents, a sum one could save up.


Until the last six rehearsals they had sung without accompaniment, but in these Mr. Damrosch allowed the use of the piano in order to prepare them for the great organ in Carnegie Hall, with which they were to sing Händel's *Hail the Conquering Hero Comes*. Part of the program was to be furnished by professional musicians whose assistance Mr. Damrosch had secured. His sister Clara's great friend, Geraldine Morgan, the violinist, was to play a Mazurka by Wieniawski. It was amazing how much they were able to find out about their director's family—Mr. Joseph Mosenthal, the composer and organist who had written the opening number, *God, Save Our Native Land*, and dedicated it to the PSC, was Mrs. Damrosch's uncle. Mrs. Alves (whose voice was marred by a tremolo which was considered an added beauty by many of the class) was to sing a group of songs by Schumann and Brahms, Mrs. Beach's new and popular *Ecstasy*, and Walter Damrosch's *To Sleep*. Ericsson Bushnell was down for Schumann's *Two Grenadiers* and Wagner's *Song to the Evening Star*. But the class was naturally most interested in their own share, for they were on the program for six songs and felt themselves perfect in Hauptmann's *Resolute Lovers*, Barnby's *Sweet and Low*—although they must remember to sing *pianissimo* where Mr. Damrosch wished it—and Thomas Morley's *Now Is the Month of Maying*.

The concert was a beautiful success. The program had been admirably fitted in length and in character, both to the singers and to the special audience. In the intermis-







Sara L. Dunning



Sara J. McCaffery




# People's Choral Union




Frank Damrosch

## People's Singing Classes



Mary S. Doly

DIRECTOR  
AND  
TEACHERS



Abbie S. Lee

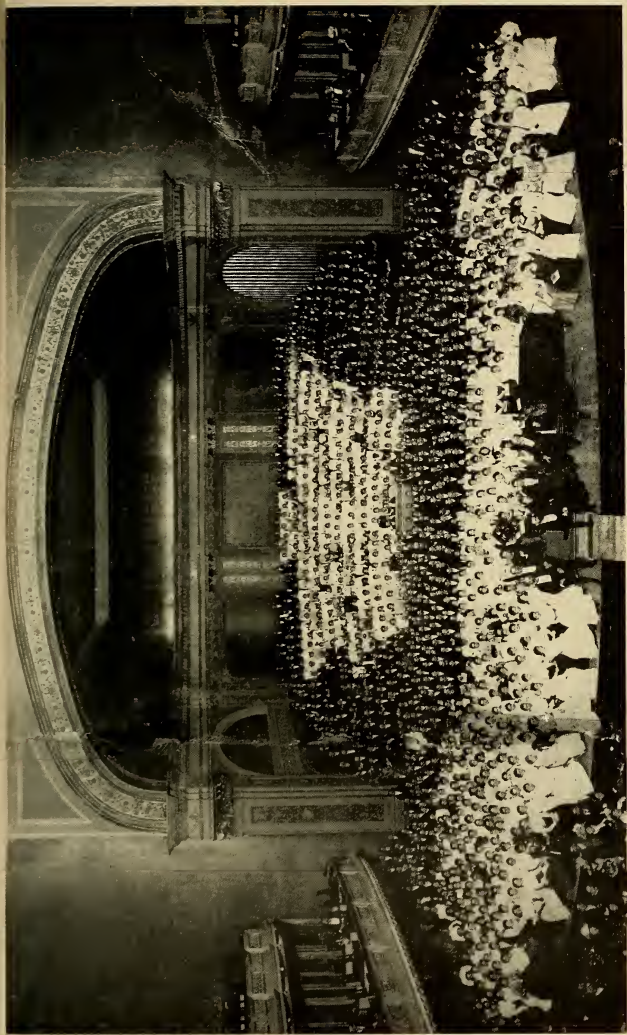
FRANK DAMROSCH AND HIS EARLY ASSISTANTS  
IN THE PEOPLE'S SINGING CLASSES



### EDUCATING THE PEOPLE IN MUSIC

FRANK DAMROSCH'S SCHOOL AT COOPER UNION FOR THE  
INSTRUCTION OF THE WORKING CLASSES IN SIGHT-READING

Drawn by Miss G. A. Davis for *Frank Leslie's Weekly*, March 30, 1893



PEOPLE'S SINGING CLASSES AND CHORAL UNION AT CARNEGIE HALL, 1900

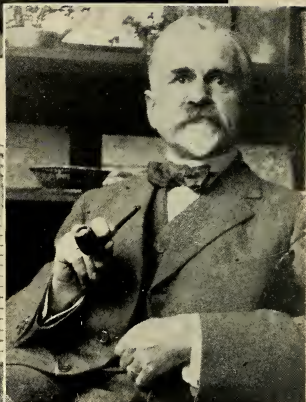


FRANK DAMROSCH, 1897





HETTY DAMROSCH, 1897



## FRANK DAMROSCH'S RELAXATIONS

1. SAILING THE "POLLY"  
WITH HIS GRANDSONS,  
LEOPOLD AND DOUGLAS
2. AT SEAL HARBOR, MAINE
3. HIS FIRST GRANDCHILD,  
LEOPOLD DAMROSCH



4. WITH GRANDSONS,  
LEOPOLD AND DOUGLAS,  
STOCKBRIDGE, MASS.

5. RESTING AT  
STOCKBRIDGE



6. SPRING VACATION,  
SUMMERVILLE,  
SOUTH CAROLINA





### SAINT CECILIA DINNER PARTY

IT WAS THE CUSTOM OF MR. EDWARD J. DE COPPET TO GIVE A DINNER EACH YEAR IN NOVEMBER TO A GROUP OF WELL-KNOWN MUSICIANS AND FRIENDS OF MUSIC.

THE GUESTS AT THIS PARTICULAR DINNER INCLUDED THE MEMBERS OF THE KNEISEL AND FLONZALEY QUARTETS, AT THAT TIME NEW YORK'S TOP-RANKING STRING ENSEMBLES.

SEATED, LEFT TO RIGHT: ALFRED POCHON, LOUIS SVECENSKI, FRANK DAM-ROSCH, ADOLPHO BETTI, FRANZ KNEISEL, EDWARD J. DE COPPET, ALVIN SCHROEDER, IVAN D'ARCHAMBEAU, JULIUS THEODOROVICZ, UGO ARA. (FLONZALEY QUARTET MEMBERS ARE: BETTI, POCHON, D'ARCHAMBEAU, AND ARA. KNEISEL QUARTET ARE: KNEISEL, SVECENSKI, SCHROEDER, AND THEODOROVICZ.) STANDING ARE: RICHARD ALDRICH, MUSIC CRITIC OF THE NEW YORK TIMES, EDWIN T. RICE AND WINTHROP ROGERS, BOTH ARDENT MUSIC LOVERS, AND PIETRO FLORIDIA.

sion Mr. Damrosch announced that the expenses of the year's work, amounting to \$2,500, had already been paid off, leaving a balance of \$1,200 on hand. He added one of those little jokes which always gave the class hearty pleasure: the money would be on ice to keep through the hot weather. At the end of the formal entertainment there was an unexpected treat: Plunket Greene came on the stage to sing Irish favorites, with Walter Damrosch at the piano. After that, no one wanted to go home.

The reviews of the concert had lost their tone of benevolent patronage. The amazing progress of the chorus was admitted, and both rhythm and intonation won unqualified praise. Since many of the choristers were young, it was not thought strange that the body of voice was fresh; but it was remarkable that they sang with so much intelligence. The worst fault, said the critics, arose from their enthusiasm—the conductor found it difficult to get a *piano* tone. But it was richly evident that Mr. Frank Damrosch's experiment was a success.

Everyone noticed how happy the director looked during the memorable evening. Some few of the all but omniscient members of the chorus knew that he had other reason for congratulation than upon their performance. Hetty had missed few of the season's musical events conducted by her husband, but she was not present at the famous concert of May 28, for on Friday, May 26, a girl had been born to the Frank Damrosches—Helen Therese, named for her grandmother Marie Helene von Heimburg and for her mother's sister Therese.

The Damrosches spent that summer of 1893 on Martha's Vineyard, in consequence of the invitation of a vocal teacher who wanted Frank as partner in the conduct of a summer music school. The arrangement did not prove satisfactory. The family had a cottage to themselves, but took their meals in a large house where several music students were

boarding—which was not easy with two little children. As for the summer music school, it proved a fiasco. Twice each week Frank crossed to Newport to conduct his class of ladies, who promised to be of considerable assistance in his future plans.

When the People's Singing Classes were reconvened in the autumn, an advanced class was formed, to which old members who had missed not more than a third of the lessons were admitted without examination. A rough and ready method, indeed; but with so large a number it would have been impossible to test individual proficiency, and such an ordeal would have frightened shy pupils into staying at home. The old emphasis was laid upon the self-supporting character of the movement: they were not "free classes," although—as a Harlem reporter put it—"persons of wealth or week-day leisure were not expected." As in the past, anyone with perfect attendance could claim a rebate of \$1.00 at the end of the year. The desirability of perfect attendance for the first six lessons, during which the year's work in notation would be fairly well covered, was particularly stressed.

In this second season it was found expedient to extend the movement to New York's West Side. A fifth elementary class was formed at Caledonia Hall under Mary L. Doty, and a sixth at Adelphi Hall under Abbie S. Lee. Mary L. Doty was a private schoolteacher who had taken courses under Frank Damrosch and, when he needed helpers, volunteered her services. People meant more to her than music; she wished above everything else to increase human happiness, and took the chance of teaching music as a means, rather than an end in itself. The other new teacher, Abbie Lee, was a gentle, charming young woman who taught singing in the Workingman's School of the Society for Ethical Culture. She remained with the Adelphi class for three seasons, during the last of which

she suffered uncomplainingly from an incurable disease. She died in 1896, less than three weeks after closing her work with the PSC.

Frank Damrosch and Edward King urged elementary students to undertake immediately a share in the management. The organizers were determined to make the PSC independent of outside direction; otherwise the work would sooner or later wear a charitable aspect, and interest from within would diminish.

It must never be assumed that all members were of the workingclasses in the usual meaning of the word, or that the payment of ten cents was to everyone a real test of devotion. Sprinkled through the classes were young men and women who taught school, worked in banks, bookstores, insurance and law offices, and although Edward King would doubtless have preferred to have the controllers of class affairs come from actual laborers, officers and committees were usually chosen from these young business people. Thus the chairman of Miss Dunning's class of beginners in 1893 was an efficient young man employed in a bank, who had joined because of his bent for music and his admiration for Mr. Damrosch, whom he had seen at the Society for Ethical Culture. Through his efforts a summer class was organized, designed to allow those who had missed more than the permissible third of the previous season's lessons to make up the work and enter the advanced class. The social value of this summer project was considerable, since most of the members had to spend the hot season in the city.

Such young men made effective emissaries in dealing with the outside world. It would have been twice as hard, if not entirely impossible, for a recent immigrant to persuade a reluctant Board of Education into making public school buildings available for rehearsals. In earlier days

many meetings had perforce been held in such unsavory quarters as bars and dance halls.

In the season of 1893-94 Frank taught regularly only the advanced class, but managed to pay a visit every fourth week to each of the elementary classes. He noted a very occasional monotone, and here and there an excellent voice. It was somewhat surprising to find so many good tenors; he was able to recommend some of them for choir positions. One of his best teachers of later years, Isaac Rosenblatt, was originally a class member. An amateur cellist, he delighted in choral music and early organized a class for supplementary, midweek study. He founded and conducted the Holt Choral Club and deserves to be gratefully remembered for his work with singing classes of colored people.

Friends of the director in the world without often urged him to teach popular songs to his classes, supposing that "common" people enjoy common music. To put the matter to the test, Frank taught his class a popular song of the day without commenting on its nature. During the subsequent week he was very much pleased by several notes from his pupils, entreating him to teach them "only the beautiful music."

As he had hoped, their musical taste was developing, and he was eager to open every doorway through which they could hope to pass. The "beautiful" music which they could make themselves was not enough; they should also have the opportunity of hearing music made by more mature artists. With this aim, he secured them the privilege of buying half-price tickets for the concerts of the New York Symphony Orchestra, of which he was both a director and a frequent conductor. The notice, publicized by Edward King, the secretary, suggests a reason for the further severance of the class from the Labor party: "I think it is wise to accept this co-operation with the Symphony Society in the hope of aiding them in their special

work of perfecting musical taste, and lifting the level of public performances in this city. We may certainly hope to add to their audiences the very best kind of material for progressive training in appreciation of the subtle masterpieces of musical art. . . ."

This was lauding the classes quite beyond the intention of their director. The admirable King showed little understanding of the necessity for a humble spirit in the follower after music.

Four hundred seats were reserved before each concert, of which any PSC member might purchase two; moreover, it was possible to sit in the balcony for a quarter. But there were many who could not afford even this indulgence—for whom it was not easy to save the fee of ten cents for Sunday's class. Something was done for them at the first great concert of Frank's Musical Art Society, founded in this same year, when four hundred balcony seats were outright gifts and the rest were sold for twenty-five cents each. In later years, when the Musical Art Society had prospered and the price of seats was doubled, the PSC members retained the privilege of purchasing at the original figure.

The PSC concert of 1893 had been accompanied only by organ and piano, but at their second annual concert on May 20, 1894, the classes were assisted by the New York Symphony Orchestra. The advanced class of 650 occupied the augmented stage in Carnegie Hall, while at least as many more from the elementary classes were seated on the floor. The principal feature of the program was Mendelssohn's *Athalie* performed by chorus and orchestra, assisted by Sarah Cowell Le Moyne, the elocutionist, and solo voices. In addition, the advanced class sang Hatton's *Absence* and a group of Mendelssohn songs; the elementaries gave Conradi's *At Sunset*, and the entire chorus joined in *Ein' feste Burg*. The critic of the *Tribune* averred



that the performance "would have done credit to a long-established choir of singers, trained in music from their childhood, and accustomed to choral singing by many years of practice."

The large programs furnished the audience advertised—beneath a round, reflective cherub wreathed in ribbons, clouds and flowers—the New York Symphony Society, the Oratorio Society, and the "Music hall founded by Andrew Carnegie." Steinway announced that his Majesty Emperor William II of Germany had deigned to appoint the head of the house "Piano Manufacturer to the Court of Prussia"; Chickering, not to be outdone, cited awards received at the Chicago World's Fair. Anecdotes of artists filled the spaces for which no patron had been found to pay. There was a notice to the effect that the concert would be repeated on the following Sunday for the benefit of the unemployed—this in accordance with the broad policy of the movement.

In the intermission Frank Damrosch announced a balance of \$1,587.33, considerably above that of the earlier season, and publicly thanked his assistants and those advanced pupils who were helping their juniors. As he finished, a harp of carnations, lilies, and roses was brought to the stage. Did he remember the picture card his father had long ago sent home to Breslau, on which his children had greatly marveled to see a flower harp encircled by butterflies? He showed his pleasure at the tribute, accepting it "as an evidence of the bond of friendship that exists between you and me."

The repetition of the concert on the following Sunday did not conclude the year's activities. On the Tuesday a reception was held at Cooper Union, to which ladies were gallantly admitted at half price. A PSC badge was offered for sale at ten cents, and for seventy-five a group photograph was available. On June 5, there was a PSC party at



Männerchor Hall, to which outsiders were not admitted except in the case of married members and young women living at a distance. Care was taken in these social activities to prevent girls walking dark streets and unsafe sections without escort. The program was so arranged that the musical events would be over at ten o'clock, enabling those who lived at a distance to reach home at a reasonable hour. Those who could remain spent the rest of the evening dancing.

Not long before, Frank had attended the tenth anniversary celebration of one of his music clubs. There the program had followed a banquet featuring sweetbreads glacée, roast plovers, and strawberries—unseasonable luxuries in April fifty years ago. It must have been a nice question in his mind whether the banqueters had taken as much pleasure in their menu and speeches as had the People's Singing Classes in their reception and dance at twenty-five cents.

## CHAPTER IX

### ART FOR ART'S SAKE

(1893-1912)

THE ESTABLISHMENT of the People's Singing Classes ranks as an achievement of historic importance, in both the musical and the social sense. Had his modesty permitted, their founder could with justice have regarded himself as a pioneer in the cause of American civilization, a leader not less praiseworthy than those whose scientific and industrial innovations were remaking the face of the country. He had proved himself a man of mature and independent vision and practical skill, and had planted a seed which was beginning to grow into a banyan tree.

He might almost have rested in complacency. Surrounded by the admiration of his singing classes and the love of his family, he might have satisfied himself with the good he was doing and slackened in pursuit of the ideal. But he did not look on the People's Singing Classes as his crowning work; he did not conceive of his career as past the initial stages. He was a young man still, with a wife and children to support, and a future to think of; the People's Singing Classes warmed his heart, but could not feed his dependents.

He had, moreover, a musical ideal which the PSC, with their class-conscious emphasis on the advancement of the workingman, could only partially fulfill. From the days of his youth, he had envisaged a world in which no one should be deprived, through poverty or ignorance, of the joy of making music; he was building the foundations of such a world. But so true an artist could not rest upon this humanitarian substructure. He needed to make music

to the limit of his own superior capacity; he felt the necessity for self-expression, the insistence of his own musical personality on its liberation. The problem was to find an instrument on which he could perform with the subtlety and confidence of Joachim on his violin or young Paderewski on his pianoforte.

All his experience, since the early days in Denver, inclined him in the direction of choral music. His skill in group handling was by this time beyond doubt, and he found in the color of massed voices the fittest reflection of his own personality. His apprenticeship in choral conducting had ranged from church choir to opera chorus, and embraced more than one society of amateurs; but he had yet to find a chorus suited to his inherent needs.

There was, for example, the Choral Club, which Walter had turned over to him in 1885 on his return to New York, an agreeable society, which sang music of glee-club quality and gave two concerts a year in the concert hall of Madison Square Garden, struggling with fair success against wretched acoustics. The program booklets were attractive, with a pleasing detail from Della Robbia's *Singing Boys* as cover decoration. He liked the Choral Club, and continued to lead it until 1895; but it was obvious that these good folk would never carry him beyond the range of their own clipped wings.

He was inclined to feel the same way about the Musurgia, that club of men singers which in 1892 asked him to become their director. The offer came at a time when, just freed from the bondage of the Metropolitan, he stood in need of money; and the Musurgia had wealthy and influential backers. The society had had trouble with the retiring conductor, who had founded it eight years before, and a third of the membership had resigned at his dismissal. Frank disliked strife, and disliked even more the "wishy-washy trash" which the Musurgia were used to

singing. Until convinced that the Musurgians desired better things, he refused to consider becoming their director.

But he had promulgated the belief that it was his mission to teach music to all who wanted to learn, and the Musurgians seemed genuinely to be of that number, so in the event he committed himself to their cause. Seven years of pleasant and effective work ensued. The society gave three concerts each year in Carnegie Hall, and from the first of Frank's incumbency, the critics commended the improved programs, describing his selections as "dignified but not abstruse." If these concerts continued to be primarily fashionable rather than musical events, Frank knew that the audiences could not fail to imbibe small draughts of musical culture.

The Musurgia was not, however, the chorus to employ in any real advancement of the art, nor, as he surveyed existing societies, could he find another adapted to his purpose. He considered the Oratorio Society, which his father had established two decades ago and which Walter was maintaining at a high standard of excellence. The Oratorio Society amply justified its existence by keeping alive the works of Händel, Haydn, and their fellows, but it had proved its inability to produce successfully new or unfamiliar compositions. It was, besides, too large and therefore too unwieldy an instrument to fit his needs.

Beyond the Oratorio Society lay the range of German organizations, such as his father's still-existent Arion, almost purely German in character, and the Liederkranz, predominantly so. Their influence extended little beyond their own membership, and as for deepening American culture in a broad sense, they might almost as well have been singing in Frankfort. A similar condition obtained in Uncle Joseph Mosenthal's Mendelssohn Glee Club—the group sang well, but were so wholly esoteric that they admitted neither press nor public to their concerts.

Since no existing instrument promised well, he sought the solution in a break with New York conventions and a departure into an unexploited field. Both music and music makers ought to bear the stamp of novelty. In Europe bold ventures of the kind had achieved success. When Mendelssohn discovered Bach, he had perhaps enriched the art as much as by his own compositions; but Frank desired to emulate Mendelssohn only in the former of these functions, for he never coveted the composer's laurel wreath.

In Paris developments of equal importance were in progress. Charles Bordes, a pupil of Franck and a colleague of Vincent d'Indy, was making history in the old church of St. Gervais by his revival of the polyphonic music of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The performances during Holy Week 1892 of forgotten works by Vittoria, Palestrina, Allegri, and their contemporaries began a new epoch by the resuscitation of one long buried.

The degree of influence which Charles Bordes's researches had upon Frank Damrosch is not easy to determine, partly because he was not especially interested in origins, always caring more for the accomplished deed than for those subtle motives and little regarded actions which bring events into being. To trust to his memoirs would be to fail completely in gaining a sense of his stature. It was not that he belittled himself in mock-modest fashion, but that he either ignored his accomplishments altogether, or mentioned them in passing with no more emphasis than that with which he wrote of a day spent with his children which turned out to be peculiarly happy.

It seems probable that he had long been familiar with Dehn's 1838 edition of the *Seven Penitential Psalms* of Orlando di Lasso, if for no other reason than the fact that his father had been Dehn's pupil in composition. Moszkowski, who knew musical Paris well, may have discussed with Frank the work of Charles Bordes, who had gone to the

church of St. Gervais a year prior to Frank's Berlin period.

Damrosch, always punctilious in giving credit, often spoke of music obtained from Bordes, but was silent concerning his own masterly editions. In his memoirs he ignored completely these monuments of erudition and genuine feeling.

By whatever channels he received it, his interest in *a cappella* music was thoroughly awakened by 1892. He saw before him a glorious field of which only enough had been explored to convince him that within, on every side, there dwelt supernal beauty. What was novel to him was unknown to America, where the impression prevailed that music of the *a cappella* style—including a great part of Bach—was of such difficulty that vocalists could neither sing, nor audiences listen to it. He had first to dispel this illusion. He knew that New York concertgoers were no longer too illiterate to assimilate a new style, especially one so natural and heartfelt.

Indeed, the audience would present less of a problem than the singers. The *a cappella* style demands precision, delicacy, intellectual subtlety—qualities which could be expected only from professionals. He could not do with less than fifty voices, but to find even fifty sight-readers would not be easy, when many professionals learned their songs by rote and shamelessly depended on the accompanist to "help out" impure intonation. Few of his choristers would have heard any *a cappella* music. Their interest must be captured, but firm discipline would be essential; and he knew that discipline would largely be determined by financial remuneration. Unless professionals were paid, they would not come to rehearsals in case of conflict with lucrative engagements. Twenty dollars for each concert was, so calculated, the smallest fee which would purchase a singer's fidelity.

The People's Singing Classes had been in existence one

year, and a year and a half had passed since Charles Bordes's introduction of sixteenth-century music to Paris, when in September, 1893, Frank Damrosch formally broached his project for a Musical Art Society designed for the performance of works in a *cappella* style.

As an experienced organizer, he ascertained the nature and amount of material assistance on which he could depend before appealing to professional singers, so that the first unfolding of his scheme was at Newport before a selected few of the wealthy women to whom he was teaching the rudiments of vocal music. Taking with him Miss Laura Post, he called upon Mrs. Nicholas Fish and Miss Callender. He knew precisely what he meant to say; he wished to improve choral singing and to introduce to America the literature of unaccompanied music, especially that of the sixteenth century. In further elucidation, he mentioned Palestrina, a name which his ladies received with awe. When he added that he wished by means of his concerts to open this hitherto secret chamber of delights to teachers and students at a nominal price, their philanthropic instincts rose in rejoicing.

It was not a period when rich women were credited with business acumen, but his Newport band were by no means helpless bits of femininity. Miss Post suggested a meeting in New York, two months hence, at which such a society as Mr. Damrosch designed could be properly organized. The ladies, certain of success in their department, encouraged him to proceed immediately to New York and engage his professional singers.

The organizers of the Musical Art Society held four meetings in November at which they elected officers, appointed an executive committee and a board of twenty directors, and adopted the constitution which Frank had ready for them. Laura J. Post, deservedly made secretary, announced that she would have \$3,000 by January; Frank



told the group that the two yearly concerts would cost \$4,000—a piece of information which induced an uncomfortable pause. But when January came, the indefatigable Miss Post had secured not only the required \$4,000 but pledges for \$500 in excess.

There is an indefinable charm attaching to the typed minutes of the first decade of the Musical Art Society. The terse records on faintly yellowed sheets evoke delightful pictures of Frank Damrosch, kindest of shepherds, attended by his faithful Newport flock, eager to put into effect his every wish. In order to carry out his plan of benefiting teachers and students, it was voted to sell them dress circle seats for fifty cents. As the funds grew, the committee became more liberal, and instead of limiting the cost of the first concert to \$2,000 voted to exceed that sum by one half. The director was authorized to spend \$500 for soloists; this he portioned out between Henri Marteau, violinist; Plunkett Greene, the Irish singer; and Marguerite Hall, a mezzo-soprano. The forty-nine choristers were reported as “cheerfully” signing their contracts—a formality omitted in later years. Frank refused to accept the \$250 voted him as the director, saying he wanted nothing until the success of the venture was established, but if a contract was necessary for legal reasons, he would sign and accept the sum of \$1.00. After the triumphant conclusion of the 1893-94 season, he received \$600; but in spite of the many uses he had for the money, he considered it the least important feature of the affair.

He was enormously interested in the success of the project, so much so that it was impossible for him to say which meant more to him, the Musical Art Society or his People's Singing Classes. With the latter he was assuredly bringing the greatest good to the greatest number; but through this younger child of his affections he was achieving effects which approached the feet of his ideal. Essentially too,

the man was a scholar with the antiquarian's passion for the recondite and obscure. When the executive committee authorized him to purchase through Charles Bordes the beautiful *Musica Sacra*, he experienced the delight of a collector.

Tante and his sister Ellie were among the soprano choristers, and so was Mrs. Theodore Toedt, to whose husband's family he owed the twelve-year-old boy's unforgettable vacation at Round Pond. Mrs. Carl Alves, whose sympathetic voice reflected a generous nature, sat among the altos. The rubicund, kindly Alfred Hallam, who had been trained in England in the traditions of choral singing by Barnby and Stainer, and Edward Marquard, German born like the director, were choristers who would work with Damrosch for many years, both in the People's Singing Classes and in the public schools.

Nothing was left to chance before the famous first concert of March 3, 1894. He had further reason to be grateful to his Newport friends, whose assumption of petty tasks left him free to attend to music, the real business of a concert. They secured a large audience of unimpeachable fashion. The stage had a semiexotic appearance contrived by hanging baskets and giant shrubs; the women singers wore what the press described as "delicately tinted costumes."

Frank wrote a preface to the program, explaining something of his purposes and hinting, as a wise pedagogue, that the music would challenge the listener's intelligence: "Our programs may not be popular, but they should appeal to all lovers of good music; our work may not be perfect, but it will be done with a zeal that will promise better things in the future."

The singers showed a slight nervousness in the first number, the Bach motet for double chorus, *Sing ye to the Lord*. But Palestrina's *Stabat Mater* was sung in such a

way as to arouse great enthusiasm and a demand for its repetition at the next concert. The third and last section of the program was devoted to madrigals and other short part songs. He had fixed upon a practicable sequence which would be followed throughout the life of the Musical Art Society and to which succeeding groups of a similar character usually conform; the first section was liturgical, the second instrumental with soloists, the third, modern music—by Brahms, Cornelius, and their contemporaries—music to relieve the tension of the religious portion without violating its serious import.

For days after the concert prolonged applause filled the columns of the critics, who hailed with joy the departure into new fields. Even the *Musical Courier*, a publication often unsympathetic to Frank's projects, commended this without stint, acknowledging that he had compassed the extremes of choral work in the People's Singing Classes and the Musical Art Society.

Nor were verbal praises wanting. A multimillionaire turned the laborious compliment, "I have been nearer heaven tonight than ever before in my life," and down the gamut of the social scale, a working-girl admitted humbly that she knew nothing of the music—but her very soul had answered it.

The second concert, following hard upon the first, entrenched the Musical Art Society in the unique position for which it was designed. It had not been and would not be easy to achieve homogeneity—a word to which Frank was devoted—with a choir of soloists. The encouraging address to which the Singing Classes responded like children to a kind but inflexible father could not be effective in dealing with the Musical Art Society. These singers were paid, they were competent, or he would not have engaged them, and if they should now prove unsatisfactory, that would be because laziness or self-conceit stood in

the way of adequacy. Frank Damrosch put his trust in the scriptural intimation that from him to whom much is given, much shall be required. He would pass over a first mistake, albeit with pain, but could not find it in his heart to forgive a repetition of the offense.

The first concert occurred early in March, the second, on April 21; but in succeeding years there was a longer interval between the pair, one taking place shortly before Christmas and the other in March. Rehearsals were scheduled for Wednesday evenings when, as he said with satisfaction, he gave his choristers "two hours of hard study." The finances of the society continued healthy, and a surplus of \$3,000 was presently divided among four savings banks.

The soloists were a great drain on resources and a prime source of anxiety, since they must be secured far in advance, and might on the very day of the concert be obliged to cancel the engagement. Without them he could not be certain of support, since the public continued to be fascinated by distinguished names and resplendent figures, but he could and did reduce the number of these *rarae aves*. He entertained for virtuosos an objection peculiarly his own, extraneous to his liking for them as individuals and his admiration for them as artists; his social conscience, not always in accord with his artistic conscience, was increasingly opposed to solo work; the chorus, the orchestra, the congregation, all manner of means by which saints make melody together—such were acceptable ways of praising God in music.

By the end of the third season fifty works had been presented by the Musical Art Society, of which fifteen were new to America. The annual report blossomed at its close into a flower, formal indeed, but not devoid of fragrance: "It is gratifying to note the growing interest of the public in our work, and oftentimes its appreciation of the high ideals

and purity of purpose that are the foundation stones of the success of this society."

In those odd hours of which he made unwearying use, he was editing and preparing for publication music which had never been available in modern notation. This was a task to endear him to musicologists, for his work was scholarly, artistic, and possessed of actual definitive value, so perfect was his exposition of choral style and expression.

Charles Bordes and the Chanteurs de Saint Gervais had preceded him in the field. From them he had obtained single copies of compositions for the use of the Musical Art Society and had these lithographed in New York, an arrangement for which he gave his Parisian colleagues full credit and proper monetary recompense. Bordes's *Anthologie des maîtres religieux primitifs* had been of especial use to the Musical Art Society.

But it is impossible to gauge the enormous importance of Damrosch's own subsequent editions, the effect of which may be compared to that of the publication of the *Musica Transalpina* in 1588. They turned the ardent minds of young musicians back three centuries from the present period which had engrossed them, deepened the historical sense, and revealed a proportion and restraint which had long lain buried under acquired floridity.

The work was fine in the truest sense, but it would no more support his family than would the People's Singing Classes. Throughout the decade he was obliged to busy himself in ways he would not have chosen, but accepted without complaint because he needed money. Very often a personal friend with the kindest intentions inveigled him into a snare. Professor Sanford of Yale, a talented pianist and a great admirer of Damrosch, persuaded him to conduct the Bridgeport Oratorio Society, of which he himself was president. The engagement kept Frank from home every Tuesday afternoon and evening of the seasons from

1894 to 1899. Helen was emerging from babyhood, young Frank was already of an age to be companionable; their mother worried about the father's lonely dinner in a wretched Bridgeport restaurant and the tiresome ride back to the city which kept him out until midnight. But Professor Sanford wished to raise the musical standards of Bridgeport, and Frank was both too poor and too much in sympathy with his friend's aims to demur. The society had two hundred members, and Bridgeport was near enough New York to make feasible the importation of soloists and symphony players; Frank gave the suburban Oratorio Society a first opportunity to sing with an orchestra. In sophistication Bridgeport was a long way from the metropolis, and the naïveté of the press was delightful; complacency attained a rare perfection. Reporters noted with undisguised satisfaction that despite the rainy night "full dress was more the rule than the exception"; they scanned a first night audience in which it would have been "difficult to find anybody with pretensions to either wealth or culture who was not there or represented somewhere in the house"; they were jubilantly sure that the wreath designed to honor Mr. Damrosch was "the most beautiful floral piece ever presented here." But they were baffled when faced with the necessity for criticizing the music; one was content with, "Mme Blauvelt appeared all in yellow with a pink rosebud in her hair." In the case of Emil Fischer, a critic edged a little closer to the question, commented on Fischer's "decidedly German twist," but added that he was "way ahead of the tenor, his low notes rumbling like an earthquake a hundred miles under ground."

But the society proper was made up of hard workers who sang with such vigor that the press marveled to see them "fresh and jaunty" after *The Pilgrimage of the Rose*, sung at the first concert. The director was not at the time "fresh and jaunty"; he had been ill several days and, as

soon as he had finished conducting, went to bed at the hotel.

Another friend, Frank Shepherd, director of the Yale Glee Club, persuaded him to conduct the two concerts, one of choral and the other of orchestral music, features of the spring festival of the Connecticut State Teachers' Association of which Shepherd was president. The concerts proper would have presented no great problem, but rehearsals were included in the contract and these began as early as April, when he was busiest with seasonal concerts in New York and Philadelphia. The frequent, tedious journey to and from New Haven consumed valuable hours. The teachers were inconveniently, if not unwarrantably, ambitious and in 1897 actually determined to give *Lohengrin*. In some perturbation Frank gathered additional singers from the Musical Art Society, collected soloists in diverse quarters, and held one rehearsal with orchestra in New York. *Lohengrin* delighted audience and cast but marked the finish of his work with the Association. He had not been himself since being thoroughly chilled at the dedication of Grant's Tomb. To conduct *Lohengrin* was the last exertion possible, and he was obliged immediately after to cancel all engagements.

When he returned from Europe that autumn and began his work as Supervisor of Music in the New York schools, he assumed also the post of director of the Orpheus Club of Philadelphia. The Orpheus had a sister society called with apt euphony the Eurydice Chorus. The membership of both was distinguished for social tone.

The women took their music with serious grace. Theirs was the younger organization, founded when the brother society had been fourteen years in existence. They used the Orpheus rooms, to which a broad marble stair led from the street, and dispersed promptly when the rehearsal ended, leaving without talk or tea. It had been their practice to



give two private musicales and an April concert, a procedure which under Frank's guidance altered to the Christmas and spring concerts which he found most effective.

The Orpheus numbered some sixty men, half the membership of the Eurydice. They were social beings and, when the evening rehearsal was over, were sure to coax him into another club room where they seated themselves around an oval table to smoke old-fashioned pipes, drink their beer, and sing song after song. Even after they had put on their overcoats and started for home, they would stop on the stair which the Eurydice had hours earlier descended with decorous feet, while they shouted out *Absence*, or *How can I bear to leave thee?*

The Orpheus filled a place in Frank's affections. The Damrosches were never bohemians; he had no time, no taste for dubious pleasures. He liked these Orpheans whose leisured way of life was as near as America had arrived to what he had envied in Georg von Bunsen's milieu. They had taste, they conversed, had some appreciation of art, were not apparently concerned with the sordid side of making a living. He admired the club rooms with the curtained bookcases, the bronze model of Liszt's attenuated hand, pictures better than the average of the day, even the commonplace photographs of comrades whose death removed the stains of mediocrity. He looked forward to Fridays, when, leaving New York at noon, he would sit in the chair car, eat the sandwiches Annie had put up for him, and work on his music; he was usually a dinner guest at a private house or at the University Club. But when his Philadelphia choruses gave their concerts, he would take Hetty and little Helen with him; they would stay at the famous Bellevue, eat a luxurious dinner and, when the music was over, have supper in the splendid dining room with charming friends and a small girl, too excited to eat much or to feel sleepy.

For almost forty years, from its founding in 1873 to Frank Damrosch's resignation in 1912, the Oratorio Society of New York remained an enterprise of the Damrosch family. Walter Damrosch completed the first quarter century, conducting a year longer than had Leopold, and celebrated the occasion, not in his own honor, but as a tribute to his father, the founder, with the memorial concert of April 12, 1898, at which *Sulamith* was sung.

Frank had conducted several times in his brother's absences, but his first official appearance was in the following December at the performance of Walter's *Manila Te Deum*. Had he sought publicity, he could not have chosen a more spectacular scene for his première, since the function served as a focal point for displays of patriotic emotion. Carnegie Hall was draped with flags, the uniforms of officers brightened the boxes and the sober lines of seats, and visiting sailors who had in peacetime belonged to the Oratorio Society joined heartily in *The Star-Spangled Banner*, which the composer had introduced with scholarly ingenuity.

Frank conducted the Oratorio Society through a period longer by a year than his brother's tenure. When their incumbencies had equaled, he attempted to resign, but yielding to persuasion, kept his post until the close of the 1912 Brahms' Festival, when physical exhaustion made his retirement imperative. A period of forty years was thus roughly divided into thirds between the father and his sons. When Frank relinquished his father's Oratorio Society, he retained only the Musical Art Society. He had given up all the others, the many choral groups of his long service.

These lightly touched upon endeavors were by no means all of his labors in the 1890's. Before their close he had commenced his concerts for young people, of which some account is given elsewhere. He occupied himself with groups representative of public and of private schools; he accepted private pupils and coached professionals. Various

short-lived clubs, such as the Wednesday Morning Singing Class, cost effort and made small returns. He was elected president of the Manuscript Club of composers, and continued to act as organist of the Society for Ethical Culture. No period of his life presented him with a greater diversity of duties, no other demanded such strenuous physical efforts; twice he barely escaped collapse, but the 1890's were his forties and he triumphed. Some among his friends implored him not to spend his strength upon the Choral Union. To their entreaties he had an unvarying answer: when he reached the hall, weary, perhaps disheartened, the joy which his humble friends took in singing refreshed his body. They rested him.

Through these years he counted himself happy. He had a beautiful and devoted wife and two fine children; if he must work hard to keep them in comfort, neither opportunity nor ability was lacking. He had given up hurrying. Music was not something which waited for him to wind it up and finish with it—music would go on forever under innumerable modeling hands. If he seemed to be always bustling from one group to another, he bore within him a serene repose.

A reporter from the *World* came to inquire what he would like to be, if he could live his life again. Frank replied that when he was a boy he had fancied he would like to be a sailor or an engineer, but that looking backward he could see that he had never had a chance to be anything but a musician. Vocations had a way of declaring themselves, and he had been predestined to music. "Yes, it fills my life completely, and I would not exchange with anyone, or choose anything else if I had my life to live over again. I am happy in all the relations of life, both domestic and otherwise."

## CHAPTER X

### LET THE PEOPLE SING: PART II

(1894-1899)

ON FRANK DAMROSCH's seventy-fifth birthday, he looked tranquilly back over his long life and saw that from the chaos of the continuous present it had achieved stability and form. The tale of his years had separated into four distinct periods, of which the third commenced with his father's death and lasted twenty years. This was what he said of those decades: "My chief interest was in the People's Singing Classes and People's Choral Union in which I taught many thousands of wage earners to learn to sing from music at sight. This proved my most satisfying work. These people sang all the great oratorios at Carnegie Hall, at the Metropolitan, and on occasions of municipal interest. They sang the century in on the steps of City Hall; three thousand of them welcomed Admiral Dewey on his return from Manila." As he spoke, there passed before his quiet and reflective eyes bright memories of eager faces on closely packed platforms, of water music and the welcoming bands of a flagship, of flowers bought to please him by people to whom a dime meant the best part of a dinner. . . .

The founders of the People's Singing Classes had always intended to have the management devolve eventually upon the members, and had settled on a two-year period as that in which they would require assistance. Thus, in the autumn of 1894, the members of the advanced class of the previous season were asked to meet for the purpose of forming a self-governing Choral Union. Frank Damrosch's announcement follows:

When I organized the People's Singing Classes in the Autumn of 1892, I expressed the hope that we should be able, ultimately, to found a People's Chorus, whose members, thoroughly trained in sight-singing, should be fit to render great choral masterpieces. I knew that such music would bring into the life of the working-man higher pleasures, nobler ideals, a broader and more satisfying humanity.

Pleasures like these come not alone from selfish enjoyment, but are to be found in co-operating with others to express in musical language the most beautiful thoughts; thoughts that shall inspire all with lofty aims and shall bind participants in a common bond of brotherly love.

For two winters you have worked faithfully; you have shown loyal devotion to the cause and have achieved results surprising even to me, who had expected much of you. I now call upon you to organize yourselves into a People's Choral Union whose purpose shall be the cultivation of the love of music among the working people.

I could have easily formed such a Choral Union on the same plans as the singing classes, retaining the sole responsibility and therefore the sole direction of affairs, but I believe that our object may be better attained by calling upon you to form a self-governing body. My principal reason is, that while individuals die, organizations live as long as their work and their aims deserve to live.

Let us have an organization of working people that shall assume the responsibility of keeping up the People's Singing Classes and of revealing the treasures of musical art to the working men and women. When I cannot work for the cause any longer, such an organization will live and work out its ends with other men as leaders, but with the same spirit as before.

Aside from this, I believe that your interest in the cause will be deeper and the cause itself more sacred to you, if you feel that by your own efforts and actions it is to be upheld or lost. While you were members of the singing classes it was perhaps not easy to realize the higher aims of the movement;

but its spirit, I am sure, has entered your souls, and I am quite content to let you work out the task it has set you in your own way.

Behind the apparent unanimity of this declaration lay a fundamental disagreement among the "Big Four." Discussion of the new constitution, prepared by Charles Stover with an infinitude of care, had brought to a head the latent antagonism between the humanitarian aims of Stover and Edward King, and the more purely musical ideals of Frank Damrosch.

The most serious divergence concerned the director's own future role in the movement which he had conceived, and without whom it could not have been founded. Since it was manifestly impossible for Damrosch to teach all the classes, King, the labor leader, strongly insisted that he should turn over the advanced group to his assistants and confine his own efforts to groups of boys and girls just out of school. Work with adolescents, he argued, afforded the most solid base for community life, and Frank's talents as an educator would here find their fittest employment.

To a practical musician, who had created what was rapidly becoming one of the best choral bodies in New York, such a scheme was unthinkable. Frank knew that his excellent assistants could be trusted to carry out his method with the beginners; but which of them was fitted to prepare the chorus for the public concert to which everyone looked forward throughout the season? What elementary would not be disgusted at the prospect of graduating from a class taught by a famous teacher into one taught by a subordinate, and perhaps a "lady teacher" at that?

There were other matters on which the committee disagreed, all stemming from the conflict between divergent ideals. Stover intended his constitution to govern the entire organization, from the elementary classes upwards; in Frank's view the constitution was too complicated for any but the advanced class. Discontent had arisen because the

movement was losing its working-class character; most of the members worked for a living, but many were not "workers" in the sense intended by the labor unions. A suggestion was made that a man who earned a higher wage than a "walking delegate" be excluded from the Singing Classes, and that girls who could afford to wear jewelry had no right to membership; there was actually some patrolling of the aisles for the purpose of appraising poor feminine trinkets. Frank Damrosch endeavored to prevent a break by declaring that he conceived his mission was to teach everybody to sing—"especially working-people"; but this formula was not absolute enough for either King or Stover.

The difference was the more regrettable because both parties were actuated by high ideals irreconcilable only because of dissimilarities of temperament. Stover's sensitivity made him a continual and heroic martyr, while Frank Damrosch's idealism was practical and dynamic. The two could annoy each other, but they could not quarrel—they were simply no longer able to co-operate, and in any case Stover was intending soon to settle in England. As for Edward King, his services had been invaluable, but the support of the labor unions had lost the importance of 1892. The movement had attracted many efficient young people to whom the narrower application of the term "working classes" might not apply, but whose assistance from within was more wholesome than the continued direction of social worker or labor leader from without.

Thus there was no quarrel, but Frank insisted on making his own position clear at the first meeting of the new People's Choral Union, when the constitution was read and adopted. His words on that occasion stressed his unshaken belief in the social worth of the movement: "You have assumed a very heavy responsibility: do not think you have nothing to do but come here and receive instruction, &c. Now you not only receive, but you also give, for you as-



sume the responsibility of leading the elementary and advanced classes of the People's Singing Classes. The responsibility was, up to now, upon three pairs of shoulders—those of Mr. King, Mr. Paulding and myself: now it is divided among a large body of people, so that each one of you must bear it as heavily as we three did. The work will be done better and you will take more interest in the progress and prosperity of the Singing Class. Go out and work for it: address all you meet on the subject—tell them what they can have by joining it—let us swell our numbers with the best class of workingmen's brotherhood, for it elevates our whole condition by the beautiful art of harmony and song. . . .”

The People's Choral Union was organized with a membership of five hundred. John M. Goodale was elected the first president. As governing body there was a General Committee, which kept in touch with the individual classes through permanent representatives in the elementary groups and through the “Part Leaders” of the advanced classes. The duties of the Part Leaders, of whom there were sixteen—two for every voice part—were at once musical and social, since they were expected to become personally acquainted with those under them.

J. K. Paulding undertook the editorship of the valuable little monthly paper *Harmony*, “A Journal to promote the love and culture of music among men and women,” which was distributed without cost to the members. The establishment of West Side classes had vastly increased the territory covered by the movement; announcements in *Harmony* were of great importance in keeping various sections in touch with each other. On its pages were to be found articles of general musical interest, special articles by Frank Damrosch, reports of concerts, editorials, and news items. Efforts were made to induce the members to contribute: “If you know of anybody with a turn for scribing

bling, who can scribble well enough to be acceptable to our readers . . . give us the names," wrote the editor.

The director had commenced his work that fall with the consciousness of lowered vitality and the threat of overwork. He had with difficulty arranged a program for Sunday afternoons; on alternate weeks he would visit his elementary classes in order to be sure that the teaching was progressing satisfactorily; if he set 2:30 as the time for that inspection, he should reach the advanced class at Cooper Union shortly after 4:00; with rueful candor he told the Choral Union that he dared not hurry, because he had almost broken down the year before, and did not wish to die just yet. It was inevitable that most of his hearers should look on their director as the property of the People's Singing Classes, and in a sense, they were right, because he was bound to them by affection and interest: but the time he devoted to them was what might have been his leisure; it was a period taken out of the driven week through which in twenty ways he busied himself earning money for his wife and little children.

He discovered that graduates of the elementary class frequently failed to ask admission to the advanced, some because of prohibitive carfare, some because of constitutional shyness, a few inspired by affection for the first teacher. To counteract this tendency, he occasionally called meetings of the combined elementary classes, through which isolation gradually gave place to a gratified sense of being members of the movement.

In the 1894-95 season these beginning groups learned, besides those choruses which had been taught their predecessors, Parker's setting of *My Country 'tis of Thee*, and *Men of Harlech*, which they were permitted to sing at the annual concert, when the more ambitious works presented were Mendelssohn's *Lauda Sion* and Max Bruch's *Fair Ellen*. The difference in singing between the beginners and the Choral Union was marked; the critics were struck

by the progress attained in the three years' period of training. The women's voices were on the whole less satisfactory than the men's, because of occasional shrillness. The tenors were excellent. The director had been able to balance the parts, achieve diction, precision, and good intonation; he could not, however, be satisfied with the expression, for in the general enthusiasm too many sang as loudly as possible throughout.

In the following year, 1895, Edward G. Marquard took charge of a new elementary class, which met in Odd Fellows' Hall on Forsyth Street. He was a pianist and a singer who had long toured with the famous Temple Quartet of Boston. Frank Damrosch had become acquainted with him during the season of 1894-95, when Marquard became a member of his Musical Art Society. After two years as a teacher of an elementary class, Marquard took over the advanced; and in 1898, after Frank Damrosch had established himself as supervisor of music in the public schools, Edward Marquard became his assistant.

In 1895 Alfred Hallam, an Englishman trained by Stainer and Barnby in his native country, took charge of another elementary class. Both of these men were extraordinary workers, passionately devoted to music, gifted conductors. Isaac Rosenblatt, one of the original members, was the third man to become a class teacher. In the autumn of 1896 Vernetta Coleman replaced the lamented Abbie S. Lee; she, too, was enthusiastic and blessed with talent. Although Harriet Adams DePuy did not join the force until 1897, she ranks among the pioneers because she brought the Bronx within the movement: Greater New York was not formed until the following year, and difficulties of transportation made the Bronx seem a distant suburb. Harriet Adams DePuy, a woman of great energy and high idealism, early discovered her vocation, went abroad to study, and graduated from the Stuttgart Conservatory. When Frank Damrosch asked her to open the first class

in the Bronx, she agreed, expecting merely to organize the movement and hand it on to a successor; but she remained for many years, rising almost parallel to the director and leading the Bronx Choral Union with such efficiency that very few rehearsals with the main body were necessary before a concert. Frank's staff now numbered five women and three men, all highly trained, loyal, and disinterested.

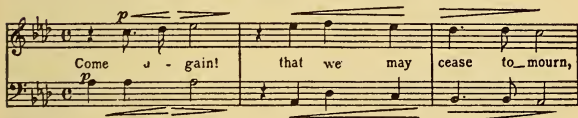
As the director had hoped, the People's Singing Classes had gone a step beyond self-support; they had become self-sufficient. Two of the Big Four had disappeared; the third, J. K. Paulding, was unobtrusively busy with editing *Harmony*; and Damrosch, himself, was seen perhaps but six times a year by the great majority of the classes. The teachers taught; the members managed. Their committees administered finances; they paid the rent for halls and pianos, secured advertisements for *Harmony*, saw to its printing and distribution; they sold badges and presented their accounts to an auditor; they organized outings and made arrangements for concerts: it was entirely a people's movement. Many of their devices were charming and original, such as this message of hope to delinquents:

## People's Singing Classes

MANHATTAN-BRONX-BROOKLYN

FRANK DAMROSCH, - Director

To those who were unable to complete the course



THE combined and consolidated PEOPLE'S SINGING CLASSES, (3 Advanced and 15 Elementary), will re-convene in October with the same old teachers and same old enthusiasm—but larger, stronger and better than ever. If you want us as much as we want you, enroll at once and bring all your friends. Where we had hundreds last year we expect thousands this.

41 University Place, Manhattan.  
1903 Lexington Avenue, Manhattan.  
245 Concord Street, Brooklyn.

Fraternally yours,

PEOPLE'S SINGING CLASSES.

Active intelligence was necessary in administering the affairs of a body which was not only large but geographically unwieldy. A new season often showed a great falling-off in enrollment; a class must perhaps be given up altogether, and the reason would be apparent only to one familiar with the locality. This occurred once in a banner district on the lower East Side because of a shifting of the population, which had been predominantly German; the Germans had made an exodus before an incursion of Russian Jews, who were not as yet interested in learning to sing. But when a class was closed, another would spring up in a different part of the city. The movement had grown to the strength of a subterranean river which forces its way up into spring or fountain.

In the summer of 1896 the People's Singing Classes gave an open air concert in Central Park, attended by at least 50,000 people. Extraordinary as it seems, many of them had never been in Central Park before, and had now traveled unknown routes in order to hear their friends. Always eager to develop any promising musical activity, Frank Damrosch approached the Park Commissioners with a proposal for monthly concerts during the following season. The Commissioners heartily agreed that such events would please the people of New York, but professed themselves unable to find \$1,000 to build a stand for the singers.

The spring of 1897 brought Frank Damrosch an offer of the post of Supervisor of Music in the public schools at a salary of \$4,000. It was a proposal which he could not well decline, although he did not anticipate any immediate satisfaction from the work because he knew that singing was considered a newfangled fad by many of the principals with whom he would have to deal; and since there had never been any systematic teaching of music, he faced a terrific task of organization. Yet the salary was sufficient to make him envied and expose him to malice and de-

traction. The *Musical Courier* published a scurrilous attack accusing him of working through "pull, persuasion, and impudence"; and at a principals' meeting, the superintendent introduced him with a defiant boast that their schools had always had the finest music in the United States and that the new supervisor was not going to revolutionize anything! Frank arose and announced with finality that personal experience had taught him that the music in the public schools of New York was as bad as it could possibly be, and that he intended to revolutionize everything. To his relief, a majority of the principals applauded this candid ultimatum.

Aside from the controversies occasioned by his appointment, he had an unusually busy and trying spring. Grant's Tomb was dedicated April 19, and at the Mayor's request he provided a band of wind instruments and a chorus of three thousand voices. The tiers of seats assigned to the musicians faced the river, and a bitter wind carried the voices far out over the Hudson, so that listeners a mere hundred feet from the stands failed to hear them. Chilled and exhausted, Frank proceeded to New Haven to complete an engagement at the State Music Teachers' Festival. His return to New York found him completely enervated and—dreadful symptom in a conductor—with a right arm too lame to use.

A nerve specialist assured him that neglect or delay might incapacitate him for years, but held out hope of a rapid cure at one of the German watering places. The alarmed Damrosches at once engaged passage on the *Friedrich der Grosse*. Four hundred members of the singing classes, gathered on the pier at Hoboken to see him off, sang *Absence* and his favorite *Lo, How a Rose e'er Blooming*. The demonstration was very exciting to little Helen and Frank, and their parents were much touched. The



stateroom was full of flowers; they knew that few of these poor friends bought flowers for themselves.

The extremity of the case had seemed to warrant a luxurious private suite. Tante and Clara Damrosch went with them, Clara to study with Busoni in Dresden. The young violinist, David Mannes, who had taken passage on the same steamer in order to be near Clara, was invited by sympathetic Hetty and romantic Tante to share their dining room. In spite of Frank's ill-health, the voyage was cheerful.

The party separated in Germany. Hetty and Frank spent a month at the Liebenstein baths in Thuringia, proceeding thence to Switzerland, which had been recommended as an aftercure, but the altitude affected him unpleasantly, as it had in Denver some fifteen years since, and they went on to Paris; then, as he felt no better, to a resort near St. Malo. A fortnight there, and they sailed from Cherbourg on the *Augusta Victoria*, which was so overcrowded that they found no room for their deck chairs except along the gutters. Frank reached New York convinced that he was no nearer health than when he had left it, but his lack of vitality proved to be due to the secondary anaemia which follows an illness, and an iron tonic completed the cure.

His first compelling task in the 1897-98 season was that of organizing the teaching of music in the three hundred schools of the city. So enormous a field could not be covered by one man, but he was granted thirty-five assistants, each one of whom instructed the classroom teachers in his assigned district. Frank's chief duty was the supervision of these assistants, but he made it a point of honor to visit daily one or two schools. Much as he liked children, he could make no personal friends out of the six hundred thousand under his supervision. Now and then amusing things happened. On a visit to a class of little folk, he heard the teacher say, "Good morning, children,"



and their dutiful response, "Good morning, Miss O'Reilly." She went on to explain that the gentleman had come to teach them how to sing. Frank said, "Good morning, children," and they replied in courteous unison, "Good morning, Mr. O'Reilly."

The progress of his work depended on the efficiency of the classroom teachers, and he found most of them willing to follow his methods but woefully lacking in musical culture. In order to acquaint them with some of the great body of music literature, he inaugurated in 1898 a series of Symphony Concerts for Young People, six of which he conducted yearly for a period of fourteen seasons. Walter had preceded him in giving concerts for youth, but his programs were of a light character played without explanation. Walter's aim had been to make his listeners like music; Frank's was to instruct them in the character and nature of musical forms. Under his direction the orchestra of sixty played a movement theme by theme, pausing for his comments on salient features, and then repeating the entire movement. To these educational but very pleasing concerts, pupils and teachers of the public schools were admitted by tickets at a cost of ten or twenty-five cents. Seats in the parquet and boxes were usually occupied by music students or delegations from private schools.

The May concert of the PSC in the year 1898 was made memorable by an entrance into the field of oratorio. The *Messiah* was followed by other major works: Händel's *Samson* and *Israel in Egypt*, Mendelssohn's *Elijah* and *St. Paul*, Bruch's *Cross of Fire* and *Lay of the Bell*, Haydn's enchanting *Seasons*, all studied and performed under their indefatigable director. The *Elijah* and the *Messiah* drew capacity audiences, but even after a three nights' festival resulted in a deficit of \$2,000, the PCU continued to function without assistance from philanthropists.

That financial crisis was in the spring of 1898, a war

year. There followed the now forgotten year of victorious celebration, when the country went wild over the Rough Riders and Roosevelt, over Dewey and Hobson. At the end of September, New York welcomed Admiral Dewey with feverish excitement. School children who had learned patriotic songs under the direction of Frank Damrosch were stationed in large detachments along the line of the parade. On a grandstand at Seventy-second Street and Central Park West twenty-three hundred public school pupils, each with a lunchbox, awaited the Admiral, prepared at a signal to burst into *Hail the Conquering Hero Comes*. Frank had tried to impress on them the importance of looking at the conductor, but the moment Dewey's carriage appeared, they gaped openly upon the self-conscious hero. When Governor Roosevelt rode past, they shouted "Teddy" with immense enthusiasm. After they had gone through their patriotic repertory—*The Star-Spangled Banner, Land of Greatness, Land of Glory, Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean*—in which most of them substituted for *Columbia, Olympia*, the name of the Admiral's flagship—the great ones had passed, and the 47th Regiment was marching by. A small boy threw down a pear and, accepting his donation as a signal, the children emptied their lunchbaskets on the soldiers. The superintendent of schools was present; it was his business to restrain the young enthusiasts, and he failed completely. Down at City Hall fifteen hundred children had met with bitter disappointment. They had been delayed in their march, and Dewey had been ahead of schedule; he was gone when they reached the meeting place. They sang their songs disconsolately, brightened up when they mistook a police captain for the hero, were plunged into gloom at discovering their mistake, and at last filed off, many in tears. The share taken by the children in the celebration proved, as always, agony to those in charge as long as the

affair was in progress, but a source of gratification and pleasant memories after it was over.

The welcome accorded the returned hero by the People's Choral Union was a complete triumph, although preceded by uncertainty and disappointment. In May, at the close of the season's work, Frank Damrosch had suggested to the class that three hundred voices singing the *Hallelujah Chorus* would pay a greater compliment to Admiral Dewey than the dinner which seemed to be the popular conception of the appropriate courtesy. A member rose to say that he had been told that the Admiral was an accomplished musician, playing both piano and violin. With his usual tact, Frank replied: "I am glad to know this. I had felt that the Admiral must like music, for all great souls do. Now, as he is a musician, we can hail him as a brother. . . . Now that we know he is one of us, he must get a tribute from his brother and sister musicians. You didn't know he had so many relatives, did you?" John M. Goodale, the president, suggested that since the classes had not yet scattered for the summer they could be kept together, to prepare appropriate choruses or what more elaborate performance should seem feasible. Unfortunately, the civic program was controlled by politicians who had, as the music critic W. J. Henderson caustically observed, "as large an acquaintance with the divine art of music as a cat has with algebra." The proffer of the PCU was not rejected but ignored.

Nonetheless, on September 28, the Choral Union gave the Admiral a most impressive and artistic welcome. The steamship *Warwick* had been put at their disposal, but before the hour of sailing so many members had arrived that the company called into service the *Mount Hope*. Frank Damrosch, who had been drilling the chorus for two weeks, was there to conduct; there was also a brass band on board. At half-past seven the boats left the pier,

and as they started, an electric sign "Welcome Dewey" flashed for the first time over Brooklyn Bridge. Searchlights from the *Olympia* sought out the eager faces of the chorus, who in their turn saw the sailors massed on the decks of the flagship. Up went the Admiral's flag, a salute sounded. The PCU sang *America*, the sailors cheered, the searchlights played ecstatically. *Hail the Conquering Hero Comes*, the *Hallelujah Chorus*, the *Hymn of Thanksgiving* rang out grandly across the dark water. Dewey appeared, bowing, smiling, like a god in the dimness. He received a delegation bearing the PCU gift of roses. "Beautiful, beautiful!" he exclaimed impressively. Then the Admiral, to whom had been ascribed a cultivated musical taste, who was reputed to be violinist and pianist, returned the compliment of the singers of Händel's stately music. He ordered his band to play, *There'll be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight*.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE END OF A PERIOD

(1900-1904)

ON NEW YEAR'S EVE 1900, the night which brought in the new century with its undreamed-of, bitter burdens, Frank Damrosch and his wife went down to City Hall to meet some thousand of the PCU come to sing the old year out and the new year in. The air was clear and frosty, quiet listeners filled the space in front of the massed singers, while beyond that charmed enclosure roared the tumult of the city's celebration. Frank noted how the blowing of innumerable tin horns merged into a deep diapason, above which the voices of his choristers rose tireless and beautiful. Whatever the new century might bring, it was much to see its entrance; not again for a hundred years would eyes behold its fellow; their own would long be fallen to dust when that New Year's Eve arrived. Frank was but entering middle age, and his own expectations were quietly hopeful; he looked forward to great accomplishments; nor, in the steady sweetness of his nature, was he ungrateful for what he had already been permitted to do; these voices singing under the quiet sky would have been silent, had he not taught them how to sing.

He took Hetty home with a rejoicing heart, but before they reached the house, they were horrified to see a fire engine in front of their door; frantic inquiries elicited the fact that their own apartment was the source of trouble. When they reached it, all danger was past, had indeed been over when the apparatus arrived. Young Frank and Helen had been sent to bed, and faithful Annie had gone upon an errand. The cook whom she had left in charge had

come into the little girl's room and lighted the gas in a wall-bracket close to the open window, and, the curtain drifting, the flame flaring, a blaze had sprung up. A passer-by in the street had seen it and sent in the alarm, but meanwhile young Frank had sensibly run to the elevator and shouted for the janitor, who tore down the curtain and extinguished the fire. Helen, an obedient little person, had been told to stay in bed and did so, although she much disliked the look of the blazing drapery. The excitement over, the parents felt that their children's safety made the New Year sufficiently happy. There were explanations and commiserations throughout that day in the house where Omama (Madame Damrosch's pet name) and Tante, Clara Damrosch Mannes and her husband, and the Mosenthal family were living in various apartments.

A few days later Frank was present at a second alarm of fire. During a rehearsal of the PCU, wax in the gas-pipes over the heads of the sopranos caught fire and threatened to drop on their clothing or, worse, on their abundant hair. Naturally the girls started to act out the words the tenors were at that moment singing, "We have turned every one to his own way." As they hurried toward the exit, the president shouted above the rising tumult, "Keep your seats! There's no danger!" "Yes, there is!" retorted the girls indignantly, but one alto with a deep voice called attention to the fact that the men were laughing—*ergo*, all must be well; thus reassured, the girls resumed their seats, over which someone had discreetly lowered the gas. Damrosch gave them a kind little lecture reminding his pupils that a chorus never acts without a sign from the director; in case of peril he could promise them that neither he nor any of the officers would leave the hall until every lady had escaped to safety. The rehearsal continued, and a fortnight later a packed house in Brooklyn heard a thousand voices from the PCU sing the *Messiah*.

For several years, Frank Damrosch had been evolving another ambitious scheme for the betterment of musical conditions in New York. That in the end it came to nothing, proved the first great frustration in his career; that this failure merged into a success was due to his realism and his ingenious power to gain the affection and support of influential adherents. In brief, this was the project: to give the people of New York a mighty temple dedicated to the service of music. Clearly a people's hall was needed, since that of Cooper Union with its ugly gas-pipes and intervening columns was the only place available for meeting his large classes. Carnegie Hall, where the PCU gave the annual concert, rented for \$400 an evening: only one such occasion lay within the means of the Union. Madison Square Garden had been built for the show business, and the acoustics made it impracticable for music. He conceived the idea of a vast building costing two millions and providing, besides a concert hall which could accommodate an audience of eight thousand, a library, recital rooms, lecture halls, and a museum of ancient instruments. In this Temple of Music, an orchestra of 150 musicians would provide three or four concerts weekly, with admission prices ranging from ten to fifty cents. It was with him a cardinal principle that enjoyment must be earned; the Temple of Music was not to be built in haste; the people, for whose good it was designed, should, during a period of five years, raise a quarter of a million dollars by various devices such as the giving of concerts for the building fund or the pledging by individuals of small weekly sums. Once broached, the project rapidly took shape, and in the spring of 1900 the American Institute of Music was incorporated under the laws of the State of New York. Among the names of the petitioners were those of the poet and clergyman Henry Van Dyke, Mayor Abram Hewitt, the well-known contractor and builder Otto Eidlitz, James Loeb,



patron of music and letters, and Rudolph Schirmer of the famous family of music dealers. The PCU was represented by the president, Ambrose Phipps, J. K. Paulding, John M. Goodale, and Theodore Schorske.

The project met with expected opposition. Frank quickly agreed when it was suggested that a number of small halls would be more favorable to artistic concerts than the vast Temple, but added that such suitable housing did not exist; everything available was either too ugly or too expensive. More to the point was the fact that good symphonic music required an orchestra of no fewer than forty musicians—a very modest estimate—and at union rates even so small an orchestra must have the support of an audience of at least one thousand, unless seats sold at a high price, which would at once blight the purpose of the sponsors. The dilemma could be met, he believed, only by the building of one great central edifice where an audience of eight thousand would pay into the box-office \$1,900 for an evening's entertainment, providing 4,000 seats were purchased at 10 cents each, 2,000 at 25 cents, and the remaining 2,000 at 50 cents. The estimated cost was \$1,700, and there would thus remain a balance for emergencies. Grandiose as the scheme sounded, the details had been worked out with precision, and the American Institute of Music was never intended to be a money-making concern. An eventual endowment would be necessary, but the time for that would not come until the masses had recognized the intended benefits and done their share in earning them.

The PCU appointed a committee to raise money for the proposed American Institute of Music. Concerts were given and the proceeds donated to the building fund. Ticket books were printed from which coupons were sold at ten cents each; it was hoped that all who could afford it would make weekly purchases. A collection at Cooper Union netted \$93.03, and the enthusiastic class teacher, Sara L.

Dunning, promptly subscribed \$25.00. *Harmony* published an unsigned article which concluded finely: "There is no truer democracy than that which takes the high privilege of making great sacrifices for the general welfare out of the hands of the few and gives it to the many—each giving according to his ability." But the goal set was too difficult of attainment, not for the zeal of the workers, but for their means. Persons of wealth were little interested in backing the project, and after some three years of unselfish effort, hope was extinguished and the money refunded.

But to return to the actualities of the spring of 1900—when the Musical Art Society gave the concert of March 15, eight hundred members of the Choral Union sang from the gallery with overwhelming effect the chorales in Bach's cantata *Ode to Mourning* and the chorus in Palestrina's *Reproaches*. The sopranos were as usual not equal to the other parts, which a critic pronounced "simply superb."

Unfortunately for the PCU, they could not accompany the Musical Art Society to Boston for the concert which was given there at the conclusion of the New York season. That was a gala outing, with a grand dinner at the Parker House before the performance and a supper following it. Yet considered as a musical event, the success was imperfect. Wallace Goodrich, who had been the organist for the Carnegie Hall concert, played in Boston, but the instrument was badly out of tune and the intonation of the singers suffered. There had been time for but one rehearsal with the orchestra, and the music with which Frank Damrosch had familiarized the metropolis was such a novelty in Boston as to require the *Herald's* explanation of the term *a cappella*. There were Bostonian listeners who boasted that their own Cecilia Society sang with greater brilliance, some thought the altos poor, others the tenors; there was a pleasant consciousness that Boston in similar circumstances

would have acquitted herself as well, although it was acknowledged that the conductor was more than adequate and the music at all events "interesting." The bleak hall oppressed Philip Hale, and he would not venture to praise Palestrina's *Stabat Mater* or Lotti's *Crucifixus* because he was not convinced that the conductor performed them in traditional style; he thought poorly of the Dvořák songs, for which Hetty's brother had furnished a pleasing translation, but, after so much caviling, he confessed to enjoyment of Michael Haydn's *Caligaverunt oculi mei*, written in a style with which he was familiar. Nor was he singular in this, for Michael Haydn's compositions were well received everywhere.

Immediately after the Boston concert, Frank went to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, to hear Fred Wolle's Moravian choir give the Bach *B Minor Mass*, in which he himself had been rehearsing the Oratorio Society through the winter. The two directors cordially admired each other; Wolle called Frank "the greatest choral missionary alive" and Frank, whose good will always manifested itself practically, in a long letter to the *Times* did not stint Wolle's praises.

It has been claimed that Americans as a race are not musical. It was also formerly believed that the prairies were deserts. When these were watered by irrigation, their latent fertility brought forth the richest crops. Similarly the experience of those who have brought musical culture within reach of the people has been that the response is immediate and wonderful in its results.

Until Mr. Wolle succeeded, by his perseverance and enthusiasm, in inspiring the people of Bethlehem to attempt the tremendous task of producing three large and difficult works, no one in Bethlehem or elsewhere would have supposed them capable of accomplishing it. He, with rare single-mindedness and devotion to a high ideal, set to work to move an inert mass, a mass which, eight years ago, absolutely opposed his efforts to

cultivate the study of Bach's great choral works, and finally succeeded in kindling an enthusiasm and love for the highest and best in choral music which bore fruit in one of the most beautiful and inspiring festivals of music ever heard in this country.

It will be urged that Mr. Wolle was able to bring this about because the conditions were just right, and that they were peculiar to Bethlehem; that the Moravians, as descendants of German ancestors, are naturally musical, and the study of music forms an important part of the curriculum of the famous Moravian schools.

These facts have, no doubt, contributed to the result in some measure, but they cannot be considered as the principal cause of success. The population of Bethlehem is to-day no longer a homogeneous one composed only of Moravians, and there are many communities which have almost as large a proportion of people of German descent. Moreover, I am of the opinion that, valuable as the German element is in any efforts to promote musical culture, there are others just as valuable.

As for the work done in the Moravian schools, I believe I am justified in saying that in nearly all cities of the United States vocal music is well taught, both in respect to sight singing and voice training, and it should, therefore, not be difficult to build upon this foundation an edifice of high artistic purpose and accomplishment.

A certain degree of musical culture may be attained by hearing good music, but to the mass of the American people the opportunity to do so is rare, and the results are evanescent because of imperfect understanding. On the other hand, that which is learned by doing is permanent and is within the reach of nearly all people.

The lesson I wish to draw from this festival is this, that what has been done in Bethlehem may be done almost everywhere, to a greater or lesser degree. . . .

Many men have failed because they have made the mistake of pandering to the so-called "popular taste" with shallow cantatas and other uninspired stuff. This sort of trash soon palls on the singers and listeners, and the well-meant effort to

develop a love for music fails and leaves a bitter taste of discouragement behind. Only the best work of the best masters is good enough for the people in their musical development. It requires great determination, tact, and an enormous amount of energy, patience, and hard work to accomplish results, but it is well worth while, for, after all, the opportunity to lift one's own little corner of the earth a little nearer to heaven is one of the few things worth living for.

Frank returned from Bethlehem to conduct the final rehearsals for his own performance of the *Mass*. Where Wolle had given all twenty-four numbers, he cut the work to nineteen, a period of two hours being all he dared venture with his public. Fortunately, he had at his command a purged chorus—some months earlier about a third of the members of the Oratorio Society had been dropped. The general interest in the *Mass* was very great: every seat was taken, there were many standees, and a considerable number brought scores. The fancy of the public was caught by learning that the conductor had ordered made in Germany two oboes d'amore, instruments which were thereafter frequently borrowed by music schools and lovers of ancient music. On the whole the performance of the *B Minor Mass* satisfied the reviewers. It was conceded that the event was of great importance; here a critic recalled Dr. Leopold Damrosch's introduction of Berlioz's *Damnation of Faust*, another was reminiscent on Dr. Leopold Damrosch's presentation of the *St. Matthew Passion*. Some listeners regretted the women's white gowns and the excited applause; they sighed for a cathedral setting, rather for the satisfaction of the eye than for the tonal effect.

Months later, on a dismal autumn evening of that year, the *Mass* was repeated before a sparse audience. The chorus of praise was then attenuated; it was alleged that the soloists sang sacred arias as if they were ballads. Although most of the critics had been hearing the *Mass* for at least

the second time, they failed to appreciate the excruciating difficulties of the vocal parts. Few, if any, realized Bach's indifference to the possibilities of the human voice.

A month later Frank was in Philadelphia for the spring concert of the Eurydice Chorus, and within three days made a second trip to conduct the Orpheus Club. The spring bristled with concerts. On May 13 the PCU, recently incorporated under the laws of New York State, gave Händel's *Samson*. The stage of Carnegie Hall had been extended for the accommodation of the one thousand singers, forcing the soloists' position almost to the center of the auditorium, an arrangement which impaired the effect of their voices. The weather was hot and there were not wanting those who would have preferred Samson to remain dead rather than to listen to his resuscitation, but the magnificent performance of the PCU roused admiration in the least tractable.

The Christmas season was always as laden with concerts as the spring. In Philadelphia that winter the Orpheus Club sang a pair of songs which Frank had composed for the society—*To the Night* and *A Love Symphony*—and his brother-in-law, David Mannes, accompanied by his wife, Clara Damrosch Mannes, was the soloist of the evening. The high points of the Christmas concert of the Musical Art Society were the playing of Bach's *Concerto* for two violins by Fritz Kreisler and David Mannes, and the performance of Palestrina's *Missa Papae Marcelli*. Critics might continue to complain fretfully of the incongruous background, might inveigh against a soloist's intonation or occasionally carp at the chorus, but the director was described in such terms as "public benefactor," "choral missionary," "the most scholarly of music masters." A voice was sometimes raised in protest against the rapidity of his *tempi*, but the judgment of a later period has concurred with his. The Musical Art Society took rank as one of the

three great agencies for the betterment of musical appreciation; the others were the Boston Symphony and the Kneisel Quartet.

Nor was his revelation of the beauty of the past at the expense of the contemporary. Grieg and Brahms were not neglected; Gabriel Pierné, Kopylof, and Taneyef had reason to be grateful to him. Among works by Americans he performed with the MAS Parker's *Adstant Angelorum Chori* and Arens's *Salve Regina*, and with the PCU Hadley's *In Music's Praise*.

But no composer owed him a greater debt than Elgar, whose work he introduced to America. In March, 1903, the Oratorio Society gave the *Dream of Gerontius*, which the devout Roman Catholic composer had written to a poem by Cardinal Newman—verses reminiscent of the dramatic works of Walter Scott without their splendid vigor. The two-act cantata had been performed in Birmingham, but was new to America. It was received as the only good thing in a musical sense which had come out of England. One voice dissented from the chorus of praises; Finck, the critic of the *Evening Post*, extolled the exceptionally fine work of Frank Damrosch and his choristers, but, while acknowledging Elgar's technical mastery, protested that his dramatic sense and erudition concealed a sterility of musical ideas.

Eager to encourage contemporary composition, Frank accepted in 1900 the presidency of the Manuscript Society. His predecessor, Edward MacDowell, had retired in justifiable wrath when the members rejected a plan of engaging an orchestra to play both old and new music, after he had secured patrons to pay for the venture. Frank conducted a midwinter concert with a promising program of unpublished works by Chadwick, Hadley, and Moszkowski, but the expenses were heavy and the audience was small. A disgusted reviewer observed that not even Damrosch's



genius for organization could stand against the selfish apathy of most of the members.

Having thus paid his respects to his own generation, he resumed his more significant and happier task of revealing the forgotten beauties of an earlier time. In the past, those of his countrymen who shared his dissatisfaction with contemporary works had remained enthusiasts of the early nineteenth century. It was he who opened the storehouse of the sixteenth.

He never forgot his mission as the seed sower. Busy as he was, he would neither refuse to write an article nor to make a public address in order to further the good cause. At mothers' meetings he stressed the importance of a woman's singing to her children, of her encouraging the family to sing together. He acknowledged a greater debt to his own mother than to his father because she had always sung about the house and he had learned to sing unconsciously, so that, when the time came for his father to teach him, he was ready to receive formal instruction. His little nephew, Leopold Damrosch Mannes, had learned to sing twenty-three songs from the beloved St. Nicholas album when he was but a year and a half old, just because he had heard his mother singing them.

A Methodist "Musical Night" at the Manhattan Hotel serves as an example of the public function attended through a sense of duty. After the guests had eaten an imposing meal, forty little boys and girls in vestments entered singing *Jerusalem the Golden*. In Frank's subsequent address he expressed strong disapproval of the quartet choir, which he called an American institution and the chief source of bickering in the American church. He added that the better the quartet, the less fit for the church.

The *Tribune* dispatched a reporter to ask Mr. Damrosch what he meant by that surprising statement. Frank explained that the nature of the quartet demanded four solo

voices each struggling for recognition. "The best church music," said he, "is that produced by large choruses, in which no individual voice is heard alone or distinct from the others." He took the opportunity to suggest that young men who were preparing for the ministry study music in the theological seminary and thus learn to understand the problems of their future choirmasters.

During this period Damrosch's chief means of educating the public was through the schools, where principals and classroom teachers no longer hampered his work through indifference or distaste. Progress was slower than he liked, but it was fairly constant. In every quarter of the city children showed a disposition to shout rather than to sing. Russian and Polish children of Jewish origin had a peculiarly "thick" tone against which he struggled valiantly. It was only through the classroom teachers that a soft and rounded tone could be achieved. He continually assured them that it was absurd to *tell* the children how to sing—they must be *shown*; if the teacher would speak in a gentle, lovely voice, not only would the pupils imitate her, but the end of the day would find her less fatigued. As another means of improving his teaching force, he persuaded the directors of the Oratorio Society to invite them to the performance of *St. Paul* with which the thirtieth season was inaugurated.

There was perhaps no more telling means of instructing these teachers than the youth concerts which, ostensibly given for children, were in a measure designed to benefit their elders. Not unnaturally the dual aim confused the public; some thought Mr. Damrosch's explanations beyond the comprehension of young listeners, and others would gladly have excluded little folks whose restlessness made it difficult for adults to hear the commentary. He could not say, "These concerts are for youth of all ages, for anyone whose musical culture is just beginning," so he went se-

renely on his course, building his programs with loving care, clothing his ideas in simple language, exhausting himself in the effort to make his heterogeneous audience understand. It was his practice at each concert to present a soloist whose performance would familiarize listeners with the character of his instrument. Many a child, fascinated by its tone and shape, conceived the bold idea of playing it himself.

Kreisler played to the children at a gala Christmas concert, when the pretty programs were garlanded with delicately tinted holly and the Musical Art Society came to sing carols. But it was the violinist who enchanted the youngsters. They called him back again and again and noisily begged for encores, until Mr. Damrosch explained that encores which had not been planned for would not fit in properly to a program and might very well spoil the effect of the whole; thus soloists who refused to give encores were not to be thought of as ungracious—an explanation which the children accepted with affable sobriety.

His less numerous Brooklyn youth concerts followed a similar pattern, with the analysis of such works as the *Emperor Quartet* and *Fingal's Cave*. It was noted that the very little children evinced a decided preference for Wagner—probably because the excerpts chosen were delightfully noisy. Occasionally he gave a Brooklyn concert frankly conceived as a project in adult education; during a Wagner request program he explained each section prior to its performance by the orchestra.

He could not determine the degree of musical culture to which his youthful audiences would attain, but he was frankly dissatisfied with that of the present generation. He acknowledged a phenomenal development of taste, but held that this had been limited to a small section of the public. He estimated that there were only fifty thousand music-lovers in New York City; he recognized the same faces at

song recitals, concerts of chamber music, the opera, the symphony. The flowerpot was filled with exotics, but the forty-acre field bore only scattered patches of bright flowers.

A decade had elapsed since the organization of the two great societies which were his unparalleled contribution to the cause of music. The PCU was spreading a knowledge of singing through unlovely sections of the city; the MAS was deepening the culture of those who already knew something of music. Yet he was not content to rest with what he was doing, and he realized that the Temple of Music would be in that generation no more than a bright dream. His mind was capable of discerning the means of victory even in defeat. There was work to be done, and since it could not follow the lines of the great plan he had conceived, he would trace a smaller pattern.

No one, unless it was his brother Walter, knew more musicians than he. They came to him for advice, they wrote him long letters, he understood their difficulties. A musician trained in America had less prestige than if he had studied in Europe, and deservedly so; he might be a proficient instrumentalist, but he would almost certainly be ignorant of music history and theory and of much else required of the ripe musician. There were conservatories in the United States where any given instrument was properly taught, but if an ambitious student wished also to learn orchestration, counterpoint, and harmony, he must pay separately for every course, and the total was a sum to frighten him into remaining, not a musician, but a mere instrumentalist.

In Europe a promising pupil was not thus cast upon his own financial resources. At the Berlin Hochschule, he paid only 300 marks of the 1,000 which his education cost annually. In Brussels a gifted student paid nothing at all. In Paris the same student would receive not only free tui-

tion but an allowance from the government. The state supported these European schools; in America it was necessary to find wealthy patrons. Frank had no ambition to create a trade school for instrumentalists and singers; he wished to develop musicians. He sighed for a school dominated by a superb faculty whose every member co-operated in giving out the broadest culture; there the best music would be nobly played and the students would, no doubt less nobly, play great music to each other. The tuition for the sum of all that was taught there—dictation, sight-singing, counterpoint, harmony, ensemble, languages, and lessons on the chosen instrument—should be kept to a figure approximating the last item in most institutions—the teaching of an instrument.

Andrew Carnegie had assured him that if he needed help on one of his educational schemes, he had but to ask for it. As it happened, the philanthropist and Frank Damosch had each been building his version of "Sans Souci"; the one was an anachronistic castle in Scotland, the other a cottage on the Maine coast. Frank had chosen Seal Harbor for his heart's home and bought an acre of land on a rocky ledge 150 feet above sea level with a far view of islands, deeply bitten coast, and limitless ocean. Three sides of his holding were wooded with full-grown spruces, birches, cedars; and a country road ran by the fourth.

The site of the house answered practical as well as aesthetic requirements; the beautiful view of the sea provided an equally comprehensive survey of the children's activities. Within certain well-defined limits they were allowed perfect liberty. Helen in the early years at Seal Harbor was too small a child to manage a boat alone, but Frank, who from the age of six had companioned his father in an earlier craft, the *Dark Secret*, could sail the *Polly* whither he pleased, if he did not venture beyond prescribed boundaries. The father used a megaphone to signal his

son in the old Damrosch way, by whistling motifs from Wagnerian opera. The signal meant that young Frank was out of bounds, but it was necessary to change it frequently because the country people adopted *Leitmotifs* as if they were popular airs, and the boy could not always distinguish between his father's whistle and the lobsterman's.

After Skibo was finished in the early summer of 1901, Carnegie invited Frank to visit him in Scotland. Since this promised to furnish an ideal opportunity for interesting the millionaire in the school which was so near his heart, Frank left his family at Seal Harbor and spent the month of July on a trip to Great Britain. Skibo was far more magnificent than Cluny. The estate was twenty miles long and half as wide, there were perhaps a dozen tiny lakes, a deer park, golf links, a salmon stream. His host took him yachting, together they played golf and walked in the forest, but genial as was the older man, the younger found it difficult to broach the subject in which he hoped to interest him. His host had said that he regarded him as the best man in America to organize and direct a great educational institution, but he had been speaking of the Temple of Music and of Frank's work with the masses; it was a question whether Carnegie would sympathize with this more selective plan. Frank was a shrewd judge of men; he realized that Carnegie no longer courted responsibility and would not wish to be the first to sponsor a project, but if he could only have come to him and said, "Mr. Carnegie, I have \$100,000 in hand; won't you please give me a million?" Carnegie would have consented without demur. He wrote his wife that his host was "perfectly lovely" to him, but, "I am, as you know, a poor hand at pushing anything in which I am personally interested"; and added sadly that he was "but a poor conversationalist."

At long last, the matter was broached; and Carnegie,

who was really fond of Frank but felt he knew best what Frank ought to do with his talents, promised that, when the younger man had a million in hand, he would himself give the school house room in Carnegie Hall. In another quarter he confided his hope that Frank would not get his million; he believed the school would not be a success, but even if it were, it must fall short of the achievement of which Frank was capable.

It was perhaps to soften the pain of what amounted to a refusal, perhaps to put a signet of approval on Frank's work with the masses, that in December Carnegie financed a special Oratorio Society performance of the *Elijah*, with the members of the Choral Union and the music teachers of the public schools as invited guests of himself and Mrs. Carnegie. The thing was done in style; the program booklets were austere handsomely, floor seats were reserved for the PCU, teachers and friends of the Oratorio Society occupied the galleries. When the host and hostess entered their box, Mrs. Carnegie was presented with a bouquet of American beauty roses. The PCU had themselves sung the *Elijah* and thus listened to the Oratorio Society with the added joy which is born of familiarity with the music. The Carnegies were really giving a great deal of happiness, and Frank accepted the affair with tact and good humor. Before the end of the evening, he addressed the house and suggested the singing of a hymn as an expression of gratitude to the kind host and hostess. Those not in the secret prepared their mouths for *America*, but when the entire audience rose at his signal, the gallery saw that the PCU were in choral form upon the floor. Then the *Hallelujah Chorus* rang out in majesty.

Spring of 1903 found Frank tired out after the press of Easter concerts. In May, he set out with his wife to go to Atlantic City by boat, intending to take a few days' rest, and on the way encountered, unexpectedly, his fortunate



hour. His old acquaintance James Loeb, who was sympathetic with all good music projects and had even volunteered a gift of \$25,000 to the abortive Temple of Music, chanced to be on board and asked Frank into his stateroom. He was some ten years younger than Frank, a graduate of Harvard, who had forsaken his family's banking business to live the enviable life possible to one who possessed great wealth, a generous spirit and an artistic sense. Although he spent much time in Germany, he was a true European who, not unlike the admirable Charles Swann who engaged himself in a lifelong study of Vermeer, employed his own leisure in translating the works of those French savants who had written upon Greek art. His mother, the beautiful Betty Loeb, herself a musician, had been passionately fond of chamber music. She was dead, and her son wished to consult Frank upon a fitting memorial: he had thought of establishing a fellowship in music at Columbia. That, Frank replied, was impracticable; President Butler had told him that the university had several in its gift and they lay idle, wanting applicants. It occurred to Frank that this little talk in a rich man's stateroom might be the most important in his career. Controlling his excitement, he asked quietly, with great earnestness, if Loeb would favor the plan of endowing a music school in his mother's memory. James Loeb was sympathetic; his business acumen told him that the proposed institution was more practical than the luckless Temple of Music; he asked Frank to write out the particulars of his scheme, and their parting left Frank full of hope.

At Atlantic City, a little incident occurred which showed him that whatever work he might hope to do in the future, the past was bearing fruit which, if few eyes beheld it, was sweet enough to make glad the sower. A smiling colored man called him by name, and said, "You don't know me, sir, but I've been in the PCU three years and I just want to

tell you what it means to me." He was a public school janitor in a Connecticut town where he lived with his wife and seven children. It cost him \$1.20 every Sunday to go to the class. Frank asked him if he hoped to sing in public; it seemed incredible that the poor fellow expected less of such sacrificial labors. But the colored man said, he just wanted to teach his seven children to sing. He knew they couldn't afford to take lessons of anybody else.

When Frank returned from Atlantic City, he was asked by James Loeb to meet with him and two other interested friends, Rudolph Schirmer and Eliot Norton, to discuss the music school. The four decided to raise an endowment of \$500,000 during the summer, each securing ten donors. Frank was less hopeful than his new allies, nor could he discern the means of raising his own apportionment. In October, Loeb, who realized that the project was endangered by delay, announced his intention of giving the entire sum. At this, Frank was almost intolerably happy, but was presently cast down by learning of Loeb's serious illness. The winter passed wearily; his beautiful plan languished and seemed about to join that lovely shade, the Temple of Music. Then the spring of 1904 came in; James Loeb had recovered and was determined to fulfill his engagements.

Now that the endowment was secured, Frank felt confident that Andrew Carnegie would redeem his promise and furnish a home for the school. In the interview, Carnegie pointed out that Frank had asked for a million; how did he expect to manage on half that amount? Frank explained that the larger figure covered housing and this, he understood, Carnegie had offered to furnish in Carnegie Hall. Carnegie asked where the money was, and Frank, controlling his impatience, suggested that he bring Jacob Schiff to vouch for it. Satisfied of the tangibility of the endowment, Carnegie offered the Rembrandt, an apartment

house next door to Carnegie Hall. Expert advice proved that it would cost \$100,000, one fifth of Loeb's endowment, to soundproof the rooms, alter the place to meet the requirements of the fire and building laws, and put all in order. Thus Carnegie's offer was of necessity refused, a matter for which that gentleman was grateful since he had stubbornly held to the opinion that Frank ought to continue educating the masses.

The old Lenox mansion on the corner of Fifth Avenue and Twelfth Street was secured under favorable terms. No rental was required, if the sponsors of the school would put the place in order and pay the taxes. After a vacancy of several years, the house was in shocking condition, but it was gracious and beautiful in design, with lofty ceilings, an imposing entrance hall and magnificent fireplaces of Carrara marble. Otto Eidlitz, Frank's boyhood friend, estimated that \$17,000 would cover the cost of renovation.

Frank resigned from his position in the schools, as of the fall of 1905. In the spring of 1904 he secured leave of absence in order to investigate existing music schools abroad. On April 11 he led the PCU in singing chorales from *Die Meistersinger* "as never before in this city or in this hemisphere," and on April 19, ill with bronchitis but full of hopeful expectation, he sailed with his wife for Hamburg on the *Columbia*.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE INSTITUTE OF MUSICAL ART: PART I (1904-1918)

THE BUSINESS which took Frank Damrosch to Europe in the early spring of 1904 was a variation upon the familiar theme. In earlier years he had gone hunting fine voices for the opera, ancient scores for the Musical Art Society, and a broader knowledge of his craft; now he went to look over the schools where music was taught, to study men and women who held in their hands the art which was to him imperishably dear. He and his wife sailed on the *Columbia*, the very ship on which he had traveled with Walter many years before. His pleasure on renewing this old acquaintance was speedily changed to dismay, for she had been long lying at the docks of Hamburg and was returned to service only because her sister ship was carrying troops in the Russo-Japanese War. The hot water pipes in the Damrosches' stateroom leaked; the dampness was dangerous to a man suffering from a bronchial cold. They complained, were transferred to the stuffiest of cabins, and, when they had all but stifled there, were returned to their first quarters. One storm followed another, the captain was seriously ill, it was a voyage of mishaps. But Frank and his wife took solace in the society and music of singers going home from the Metropolitan Opera House. The Damrosches had intended to stay on board as far as Hamburg, but disembarked at Cherbourg in considerable anxiety lest his cold develop into pneumonia.

Paris cured him. There the weather was mild and lovely, and the chestnuts were in bloom. But he did not love Paris—the family said he had a “Paris look” and a

"London look," the former critical, the latter cheerfully urbane—and he gave credit for his recovery, not to Paris in springtime, but to some tablets bought on the Rue de la Paix—at an English drugstore.

His investigations of musical education in Europe began at the Paris Conservatoire, where he found no occasion to praise anything but the fine library. The Schola Cantorum of Vincent d'Indy pleased him better because there he heard superb *a cappella* singing, and at an old monastery on the same street he experienced the joy of listening to the Chanteurs de St. Gervais, and the promise of more lasting happiness in the possession of a complete edition of their works.

In Amsterdam he was no more successful in his search than in Paris, and word of a family misfortune met him there which considerably altered the summer's plans. Hetty was awakened on her birthday morning by a Beethoven *Serenade* played in her honor by Julius Roentgen, the conductor, composer, and pianist, and his two gifted sons. They all shared a gala breakfast; after it, she was told gently of the cable which brought news of her sister's death: Therese, the girl with whom Frank had gone shopping years ago in Berlin and who had looked so charming in her ugly jacket—such vignettes light the memories of other days. She had loved music and people, had helped with the singing classes—he, too, would miss Therese. Understanding Hetty's insistent longing to comfort her father and mother, he took her at once to Bremerhaven and saw her off for home on the *Kronprinz Wilhelm*.

He let her go in all tenderness, and, with uncomplaining acquiescence, went on alone to Leipzig, where Artur Nikisch was titular head of the conservatory founded by Mendelssohn, that famous school to which Frank's father had planned, more than fifty years since, to run away from home. Nikisch was absent, on tour with his orchestra; and it appeared that the tie between him and the conserva-

tory was of the loosest. Further, there were no signs of co-ordination between various departments, while discipline was so lax that, if a student felt disposed to cut a theory class or an orchestra rehearsal, he needed no excuse beyond his own desire. Frank inquired of Hans Sitt, that admirable violin teacher, the practice of the school as regarded faculty meetings. Some of them liked, it seemed, to sit together over their beer, but on these occasions they avoided shoptalk. Frank was honestly shocked: he would not take Leipzig for a model.

In the town he visited Karl Reinecke, whom he had known when he himself was a boy and Reinecke had come to Breslau as a piano soloist and produced a bag of candy whenever he dined with the Damrosches. Now Reinecke was over eighty, poor and cross, living in a top-floor flat with eight spinster daughters. He had directed the conservatory for more than thirty years, and had long been a conductor at the Gewandhaus, but he received no pension and did not know what would become of his ancient women-folk when he was gone. This was a matter which Frank could do something to remedy, and Karl Reinecke was soon the recipient of two pensions, one from the conservatory and the other from the Gewandhaus.

From Leipzig, Frank went on to Dresden and then to Stettin, without finding much of value. Berlin was next upon his itinerary. His old friend Joachim had moved his Hochschule into splendid quarters at Charlottenburg. He was as cordial and charming as ever, but Frank found no reason to alter the opinion he had formed almost twenty years before: Joachim was an artist-teacher of the violin, but in no real sense a director. The catalogue was a splendid piece of work and represented almost all he wanted to do in his own school, but, unfortunately, Joachim's Hochschule failed to follow its own prospectus. "It's splendid," said Frank to the secretary, who agreed, but added that very

few lived up to it. "Some of them start to, but they don't keep on with it," he added gloomily. Frank asked if Joachim did not enforce his rules. "Oh, no, that's more than he can do," replied the dejected secretary. Other inquiries were answered with a shrug, and a muttered, "We spread a rich table—we do not compel anyone to eat." Clearly the Hochschule was no model for Frank Damrosch.

He went from Berlin to Vienna, where he watched the gifted Rosa Papier teach a vocal class. Admirable as was her work, she did not earn enough to put her boy through college, and in private begged Frank to find a place for her in his school. To his astonishment, every other teacher in the conservatory made a similar request: even the director at the end of the tour of inspection took him aside to ask if Mr. Damrosch could not make use of him in New York. Since the Institute would not open for another eighteen months, he could make no promises. The instruction in the conservatory was excellent, but there was no co-ordination between departments, and he discounted something from the results because of the superior native talent of the pupils, most of whom came from Bohemia, Hungary, and Austria.

It was in London that he discovered the only school which he considered fit to serve as a pattern for his own. That this was the Royal College did not reflect on the Royal Academy, where he did not investigate conditions because the director was out of town and in Leipzig he had had enough of visiting an institution in the absence of its head. At the Royal College, Sir Hubert Parry was assisted by a faculty whose members co-operated fully with each other in developing thorough musicians; unlike the other institutions he had visited, this was in no sense a forcing-house for concert performers.

In his own country a special honor awaited him. During his absence Yale University had signified a wish to



confer upon him the degree of Doctor of Music; he returned in time to receive it at Commencement, June 25, 1904. Thenceforward he was known to all but his intimate friends as Dr. Damrosch, or, in order to avoid confusion with his brother Walter, as Dr. Frank Damrosch. It was a form of address which seemed peculiarly suited to his quiet and dignified person.

The summer of 1904 was spent at Seal Harbor in private study, preparation of concert programs for the coming season, and planning for the new school. He was freeing himself from many old burdens in order to devote all his energy to the Institute; he had already handed in his resignation from the public schools and this would be his final season with the Orpheus Club. Nevertheless, at the urgent request of the president, he accepted the leadership of the Mendelssohn Glee Club, influenced somewhat by family feeling—Hetty's Uncle Joseph had founded the club and conducted it up to the time of his death—and also by the high standing of the membership in both a social and a musical sense.

In September, acting on the request of Paul Warburg, a trustee of the new school, Frank drew up a report of his foreign researches in which he stated his considered opinion that the conservatories of Europe were trade schools where every teacher was absorbed in his own field and in no way collaborated with other members of the faculty. The shining exception to this unsatisfactory condition was the Royal College of Music in London, where a broad plan was carried out by teachers who acted not only in a private capacity but as a part of the whole faculty. His own object was dual: to train professional musicians and to develop musical culture in all classes of the people. He wished to teach music teachers, and described the present state of the profession as "bad beyond belief," adding his gloomy suspicion that 90 per cent of those who were then teaching

music had neither natural ability nor requisite education. He believed that "a true art school in music" would be a factor in developing a musical life in America comparable to that of Europe. Although music was not a part of American family or national life, the average student was more intelligent, more willing to work, than his European counterpart; such qualities could be made to serve in place of those advantages of environment which were universal abroad.

His breadth of mind was demonstrated by the faculty he gathered about him. He showed no desire to provide a dun-colored background against which to exhibit his own brighter gifts, and every one of his teachers was a proved artist. Although he intended to revisit Europe in 1905 in search of further talent, he found a promising nucleus in this country. The Kneisel Quartet agreed to exchange Boston for New York with the object of teaching in the Institute. This was an acquisition of unparalleled value. Boston provided two other faculty members, Alfred Giraudet, late of the Paris Grand Opera, and that talented theorist, organist, and essayist, Percy Goetschius, who would teach theory and composition. The competent soloist, Mrs. Theodore Toedt, was engaged for the vocal department, and Frank reserved to himself the subject of pedagogy. For lectures, he could count on several good men—his own brother, Thomas Tapper, the critics W. J. Henderson and H. E. Krehbiel.

Meanwhile the project was being shaped in the large. At James Loeb's suggestion, a governing body of fifteen was formed. Rudolph Schirmer, interested in the school from its inception, generously donated the Schirmer Circulating Library of Music. The Loeb family continued to act with extraordinary generosity; James Loeb agreed to pay for the equipment of the building, including pianos and an organ, to the cost of \$19,000; trustees of his mother's

memorial, the Betty Loeb Musical Foundation, added to James Loeb's initial gift the interest on \$100,000 for a period of ten years. A corresponding liberality of mind showed itself in the stipulation that the school should be open to both sexes, to representatives of every race and color, and to adherents of any creed.

While so much was being done to perpetuate the memory of one woman whose children had loved her, Frank's own mother, whose birthday had been Betty Loeb's, died after a brief illness. He could not raise a memorial building or endow an institution in her honor, but the daily life of the man was a witness of her tender influence. How often he had said, how often he was yet to say: My mother taught me to love music; my mother sang to me! She had made her children good, she had made them fit to become musicians. Since his father's death, he had been her counselor. Walter was the light in her house, but he was the fire upon her hearth. Her passing might seem, to those who knew nothing of such family love, a lifting of a burden from the shoulders of middle-aged children; in reality it left a void within their hearts. The members of the Oratorio and New York Symphony societies followed her sons to the funeral, and a newspaper commented upon the passing of the "Queen Mother of New York's most musical family," words which pleased her children more than columns in their own praise.

So the Damrosch matriarchy was at an end; a breakup of communal life ensued, nor could the family realize how quickly the old patterns would reshape themselves. Tante in her mid-fifties was still teaching music, but her sister's death made her feel that she was growing old, and her physician advised her to resign her classes. A few days before Madame Damrosch's death, a girl had been born in the Mannes family. Tante had helped bring up Leopold, who was now five, but she felt she would be of little

use to the new baby. In the same building Elise and Herman Mosenthal sorrowed for Therese, Hetty's only sister, who had died in the spring. Since everyone in question liked everyone else, it seemed kindest to persuade the Mosenthals and Tante to go to California together for the winter.

From Frank's busy life scant time could be spared for meditation on his personal loss, but the music which engrossed him that winter was the noble expression of exalted grief. Twenty-seven years before, his father had conducted the first American performance of Brahms's *Requiem*, and now, within two weeks after his mother's death, he, too, led the Oratorio Society in that great work. Aside from the private solace, he could note with gratification the improvement of public taste in the quarter century. When his father had directed that music, the sale of seats brought in \$18; it had been the nadir of his disastrous season with the Philharmonic. When the son played it, Carnegie Hall was crowded by an appreciative audience, the great chorus sang with reverential gravity, it was conceded a momentous event.

During the spring of 1905, as the time for opening the new school approached, respectful newspaper comment was welcomed. Dr. Damrosch divulged various cherished ambitions, such as his intention that a graduate should not find his career blocked by financial inability to rent a hall in which to make his debut; the Institute would assume the expenses of such recitals without publicizing the school's sponsorship.

The school was incorporated as The School of Music of the City of New York, but when it was learned that a small private enterprise bore the same name, a change was made to The Institute of Musical Art of the City of New York. Among students, faculty, and friends, the IMA

served as a convenient appellation, but many always spoke of it as the Damrosch School.

April, 1905, arrived, and, secure in Otto Eidlitz's promise to have the Lenox mansion ready for occupancy in October, Frank Damrosch crossed the Atlantic to complete the roll of faculty. He went at once to Berlin, where he hoped to engage Etelka Gerster, a former prima donna whose lovely voice had failed while, in the 1880's, she had been singing in America. She was a mistress of style, an old pupil of Marchesi, and was even then preparing a book of exercises for women's voices based on the method of her great teacher. In Berlin she had many talented pupils, including Julia Culp, and could not, she insisted, altogether desert them. But she would send Madeleine Walther, her trusted assistant, and come herself for three months of the year so that the vocal department could honestly advertise her as its chief.

This satisfied Frank as far as voice culture was concerned, but the securing of an eminent pianist was an affair of equal importance. A musician of outstanding ability was then at Bonn playing during the Beethoven Festival, and thither Frank went, convinced of the advisability of engaging him. However, on meeting, the two men discovered nothing but their art in common; and Frank, who realized the advantage of having his school recommended as one qualified to furnish a training as excellent as could be gained in Europe, without those moral dangers with which Europe was thought to be honeycombed, did not think that the musician's predilection for liquor would be judged leniently at home. He left the Continent without securing a pianist, but as he was walking on the Strand the day after arriving in London, he chanced to meet Pablo Casals and Harold Bauer in company. When they learned of his quandary, they united in suggesting Sigismund Stojowski, a pupil and friend of Paderewski and

like him a Pole, but by adoption a Parisian, who could be found living with his mother in the suburbs of Paris. He was not only an accomplished pianist but the composer of charming and subtle chamber music.

Frank had left France only the day before, but no trip could be considered too arduous when it might aid the good cause. He had a rough passage on the midnight boat, traveled direct to Paris, and slept at his hotel until an hour suitable for a morning call. At Stojowski's flat, he heard him play Schumann's *Sonata in F sharp minor* on a hideously out-of-tune piano. His delight at Stojowski's exceptional ability was mingled with surprise approaching awe at an artist who could play an instrument in that shocking state. He liked Stojowski personally, and before he left, had agreed with him on the terms by which the pianist became a member of the Institute faculty.

Frank's next mission was to Georg Henschel in Scotland. Him he had known in Breslau as a gifted small boy, behaving at rehearsals in such a naughty way as to shock decorous little Tante. Frank considered his style of *Lieder* singing inimitable and felt himself fortunate in securing him as a coach.

Soon he was back in New York busily buying instruments, as he had done twenty years ago for his ill-fated Denver store, but now on a grander scale which allowed purchase of Mason and Hamlin and Steinway pianos, even a pipe organ for the room which had formerly housed the Lenox Library and would hereafter be the recital hall. He saw the Schirmer library placed in the basement, the lunch-room almost ready for service; the registrar and the librarian were engaged when, with an exultant heart and weary body, he joined his family at Seal Harbor for a much needed vacation.

October 11, 1905, was the memorable day on which the Institute of Musical Art opened. He had hoped for an en-



rollment of 150, and his less-sanguine trustees had guessed a third of the number; but all expectation had been too moderate, for 281 students were admitted in the first semester.

At the formal opening exercises October 31, the Musical Art Society sang Mozart's *Ave Verum* and *Ring out, wild bells*, composed by Leopold Damrosch. There were four addresses, mercifully brief. Cornelius Cuyler, speaking for the trustees, took up less than one minute; Woodrow Wilson, at that time president of Princeton, made a speech in which grace of expression draped a singular lack of matter; Felix Adler, who followed, ventured to differ from Wilson—in his opinion America had already a spirit worthy of expression. But the speaker of the afternoon was in every real sense the director, Dr. Frank Damrosch. He paid a pleasant tribute to James Loeb, but the weight of what he had to say lay in his insistence on the necessity for a complete education of the musician in mind, body, and spirit; instruction was not a synonym for education. He spoke resolutely of his somewhat autocratic intentions; the student of the Institute must put himself entirely into the keeping of the faculty; they, not he, would gauge and supply his needs.

The next outstanding event in the history of the Institute was the first of the annual recitals in commemoration of Betty Loeb's birthday, January 16. It had been her custom to invite her friends to a concert by professionals in the music room of her own home—surely the most gracious of birthday parties, this generous sharing of desired beauty—and her children wished to continue the practice in their mother's honor. Her sons retained the list of guests she had invited to her charming fetes, and these old friends were the first to be asked to the recitals; the vacant places were assigned to students. During the twenty-eight years in which the concerts were given at the Institute, the roll



of those who had known Betty Loeb in her lifetime steadily diminished, leaving always more seats for the young and ardent who knew of her only as a woman who had been greatly loved. The gradual change of age to youth in the audience lent a fresh, romantic charm to these occasions.

But the recital of January 16 marked but one day in a year of many concerts. During the first season the students gave twelve recitals, the Kneisel Quartet gave five, the Flonzaley, three; there were six solo recitals by different members of the faculty and three violin and piano recitals by David Mannes and his wife, Clara Damrosch Mannes.

James Loeb's interest never wearied. He commissioned Gutzon Borglum to design a seal for the Institute. Though he was himself a ripe classical scholar, he modestly suggested that Dr. Damrosch consult a *savant* for an appropriate Greek motto. The one selected might well have been his own and Frank's: *Let us devote ourselves with ardor to noble and valiant works*. The beautiful seal represents a muscular Orpheus with outstretched lyre, his head bent, the lips parted, an expression suffering and absorbed.

But generous as were the Loeb's, more money was necessary, not merely for scholarships but also for the expenses of operating. In April, 1907, an Auxiliary Society was formed at a meeting of interested friends in the home of Harry Harkness Flagler. The functions of the new Society were varied: they included provision for scholarships and for certain branches of musical education proper to the Institute but not as yet assumed by it, the securing of proper housing for nonresident students, and the dealing with deficits as they arose. The Auxiliary Society gave distinguished service during the twenty-one years of its existence. The benefits derived from it were in part social: the Society sponsored a series of teas in honor of distinguished musicians, at which students met and occasionally

played to the guest of honor. Alive to the fact that many gifted pupils came from homes ignorant of the amenities, Dr. Damrosch was heartily grateful to the cultured women of the Auxiliary Society for the trouble they took in improving the address of his students.

The director had engaged a faculty in everyone of whom he had confidence. Having done so, he refused to interfere in the conduct of classes or the private instruction of pupils, unless he was convinced that such interference was necessary. His staff worked well together, but if ever criticism arose, he was unaffected by it until he had satisfied himself of its justice. With Franz Kneisel he was on terms of friendship; to the younger men and women he was kind in his dignified, sincere fashion. Where music was concerned he was exacting, not for any petty reason, but because of the love and honor he had for the art. Without something of the rigorous and inflexible, it would not have been possible to hold the Institute to the standards his musical conscience demanded.

The Kneisel Quartet, the core about which he had formed the faculty, disintegrated in the spring of 1906, when Alwin Schroeder returned to Germany and Julius Theodorowicz to Boston. Franz Kneisel was weighing an offer from the Philadelphia Orchestra when Dr. Damrosch was empowered to make a more attractive proposition; if Mr. Kneisel wished to secure a cellist and a second violinist with a view to continuing his work in chamber music at the Institute, he could take his family to Europe and spend a summer in the search without incurring any personal expense. As a result, Willem Willeke, solo cellist of the Imperial Orchestra in Vienna, who later married Kneisel's daughter, and Julius Roentgen of Amsterdam, son of the Damrosches' old friend, joined the quartet and, after preliminary rehearsals at the Kneisels' Blue Hill cottage, convinced Dr. Damrosch, from over the way at Seal

Harbor, that the Kneisel Quartet would be as effective as ever.

In 1909 the Institute faced a grave problem when the Lenox property was put up for sale. Efforts to find an existent building as dignified and practicable as the old were unsuccessful, and it was decided to purchase a site and have plans drawn for an edifice which would meet the special requirements of a music school. To James Loeb's brother-in-law, Paul Warburg, belongs the merit of selecting the beautiful situation at the corner of Claremont Avenue and 122d Street; Donn Barber designed the Institute and Frank Damrosch's boyhood friend, Otto Eidlitz, put up the building and, as his own gift, embellished the director's office with choice woods. Again the Betty Loeb Musical Foundation assisted the school; \$150,000 was loaned to the building fund. Large private gifts increased the amount until it approached the goal of \$400,000.

A sister of James Loeb, Mrs. Paul Warburg, laid the cornerstone on March 26, 1910, and on the following November 5 the completed building was formally dedicated. George McAneny, cultivated gentleman and devoted public servant, then president of the Borough of Manhattan, made an excellent address in which he complimented Dr. Frank Damrosch on his unselfish devotion to the cause of music; spokesmen from Union Theological and Columbia University welcomed the Institute to the "Acropolis" of New York; Professor Max Friedländer, the distinguished musicologist of Berlin University, launched himself in a stream of laudatory remarks in English, relapsed into German, and unluckily was not generally understood. James Loeb had cabled, "Let us continue together to strive for the beautiful and shun no sacrifice in our endeavor to attain it," and Walter Spaulding brought a greeting from Harvard University—its purport was singularly sympathetic to Frank Damrosch: "We must become a nation which does not simply listen

to music when it is perfectly convenient, but which shows such an unquenchable thirst and hunger for music that we cannot get on without it." Otto Eidlitz, the builder, gave the keys to the architect, who delivered them into the hands of the chairman of the board, who in his turn presented them to Frank Damrosch, commending him as a "noble and worthy son of a noble and worthy father." In Frank's grateful and realistic response sounded a serious, perhaps a warning note: "A school is not made permanent by its building. That is done by the quality of its work and by its adherence to the highest ideals."

He had spent the summer at Seal Harbor, returning to New York in time to make certain that all was ready for the opening. The house on the rock above the Atlantic was his place of refreshment rather than of rest. There, near the water which he had loved all his life, he worked almost as hard as in the town in preparation for the winter's activities and in untiring study of old scores which he had found in Europe or had sent to him by those who knew his antiquarian interests. There were hours devoted to the children, there was time for his friends; the first boat trip of the season was always over the bay to the Kneisels' cottage at Blue Hill and, as year by year the colony of artists returned, he enjoyed their jolly and informal parties. Yet in spite of all diversions he was essentially a scholar with the scholar's tendency to seclusion.

In the previous year, 1908, he had taken a real holiday. Heretofore his visits to Europe had been business trips with but a few hours spared to art galleries and to relations, but this time he went to Italy, a country he had never seen, and both Hetty and Helen and a young friend of his daughter's were with him. The two girls were in their early teens, of an age and intelligence to be interested in everything they saw. On his birthday they breakfasted under the orange trees at Amalfi and in the afternoon drove to

Ravello and sat in the garden which Wagner had transmuted into Klingsor's *Zaubergarten*; their driver announced himself as a cousin of Caruso and said scornfully that there were better voices right there in Amalfi and Ravello. All Italy was a *Zaubergarten* to the little party, although from time to time each of them was ill and Frank did not feel like himself until, over the Austrian frontier, he had a glass of beer. Just as he believed that a tablet bought from an English chemist in the Rue de la Paix cured a bronchitis approaching pneumonia, he always affirmed that one glass of Austrian beer had vanquished the ills engendered by six weeks in Italy.

At Obersalzburg they found old friends, the Gerickes. Wilhelm Gericke had recently completed his long engagement with the Boston Symphony, during which he had been often in New York, where the families had become much attached to each other. Little Mädi Gericke was Helen's friend; so there were now three girls to take about. Dr. Damrosch escorted them through the salt mine at Berchtesgaden, never dreaming how sinister the name would one day sound.

The girls were looking forward to Bayreuth as the climax of the summer, and Hetty made him promise not to spoil their pleasure by censuring the performances. He agreed not to find fault and was rewarded by discovering no necessity for strictures. Even so exacting a listener was disposed to lenient judgments by having with him Hetty, the girls, and young Frank, who had joined the party at Salzburg. The poor boy was fresh from a harrowing experience: he had been taking a bicycle trip with a friend, and his companion had fallen ill with typhoid and died. Everyone wanted to comfort the newcomer and soften his remembrance of the painful ordeal.

On this visit Frank failed once more to greet Cosima Wagner—she was ill—but he visited her son Siegfried, and

enjoyed a long talk with Karl Muck, the principal conductor. Karl Muck and Frank Damrosch had both been born in 1859; Muck's birthday was October 22, the month and day of Leopold Damrosch's birth; to Frank the twenty-second of the month bore an almost religious significance; the coincidence bound him to the luckless Muck.

That was a holiday summer, but even in vacations his chief happiness lay in music. The scenes he most wished to remember were Worcester Cathedral while Elgar conducted his *Dream of Gerontius*, the hotel in Venice where Wagner composed *Tristan und Isolde*, and one more personal, more romantic—an evening in the Umbrian hills, clear moonlight and myriads of fireflies, the scent of lavender flowers, a terrace edged with cedar trees, and he himself seated at a piano just inside the open window and, in the shadows, playing for the first time since his boyhood Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata*.

In the autumn of 1909, before the building of the new Institute, he had been mortified by the way the United States bands played for the Hudson-Fulton celebration. There he stood on the balcony while band after band marched up Fifth Avenue, suffering shame because those of his adopted country were undeniably the worst. As a result, two years later, a new department opened in the Institute, which had in the meantime removed to Claremont Avenue: a bandmaster's school, under the supervision of Captain Clappé, a graduate of the English Royal Military School of Music. Dr. Damrosch had made notable efforts; he had persuaded his executive committee to offer scholarships, he had been himself to Washington and conferred with General Leonard Wood, the Chief of Staff, and had worked out a comprehensive plan by which promising candidates from army bands would receive two years' training to fit them both to lead bands themselves and to teach others to do so. These special students were housed



on Governor's Island, where they practiced their instruments, but attended classes at the Institute in harmony, counterpoint, practical acoustics, arrangements, and ensemble playing.

Family events continued to diversify the routine of his life. On May 15, 1911, young Frank was married to Dorothy Frisby of New Haven. They were both very young and very fortunate in each other. The true Christian spirit of Leopold Damrosch had its rebirth in this son of his eldest son.

The next summer Helen and her father and mother spent in Norway. Always sensitive to scenery of sea and mountain, that of the fiords roused him to spiritual exultation and to physical feats of strength. News came to him in Norway of the birth of a first grandchild, another Leopold. His son had quietly persisted in entering the Church and in making an early marriage; the father had feared that he was overhasty, but now he was convinced that Frank the second had shown wisdom in his generation. To suspect that becoming a grandfather turned him into an old man never occurred to him.

January 10, 1913, was the twenty-fifth anniversary of his own wedding to Hetty Mosenthal. They celebrated by a quiet, happy trip to Bermuda and by taking with them Helen, who was then nineteen. The next year Dr. Damrosch went twice to Europe, first in the late winter to secure piano teachers and to visit his daughter, who was living with a Parisian family in order to improve her French, and again in June for a holiday, with his wife, her mother, and the faithful Swedish Annie. The resourceful Helen met them in Chester and, although it was already eleven o'clock on the evening of her father's birthday, she was ready with a festive table and the cherries and roses which were symbols of his day.

After a fortnight in Wales and Cornwall, they all went



to Germany. The assassination of the Austrian Archduke at Sarajevo occasioned passing anxiety, but the uncle whom they were visiting, a colonel, was reassuring. "My dear Frank," he protested, "it costs too much to go to war nowadays. There isn't enough money to pay for it." The colonel showed his American relative the barracks, a uniform lying ready for each reservist, a gun neatly labeled; if an order to mobilize should be issued, a man had only to hand in a slip bearing his name and the sergeant would deliver to him his equipment. All this seemed vaguely ominous to Frank, but scarcely prepared him for the events of the next week when, emerging from a sylvan walk near Freudenstadt in the Black Forest, he saw a telegraph pole to which was affixed the fateful order for general mobilization. He gathered his party together and started immediately for The Hague.

The journey took forty-eight hours instead of the normal thirteen. The worst event on the way was losing Great-grandmama. People were fairly spilling out of the railway carriages, but there was some space in a baggage car. They threw in their luggage and clambered after it, and a good-hearted Dutchman stowed Great-grandmama Elise upon a vacant shelf. Then came an official who ordered them out, and in a minute they were forcibly removed without an opportunity to lift down Great-grandmama, whom they left, the dear and ever cherished, with no protector and no money, upon her lofty perch. When they realized that the train from which they had been ejected was bearing her toward the border, they stood on the platform in a state of perturbation too acute for any realization that the situation had an element of mirth. They were told there would be no more trains, but to their relief another arrived in a half-hour, and at the Dutch frontier they found Great-grandmama sitting upon a wooden bench, waiting patiently to discover what destiny intended for her.

Here a fresh difficulty rose. Dr. Damrosch's four womenfolk could cross the border without passports, but the official refused to let him accompany them. In those days no one had needed passports except to go into Russia. Fortunately Frank had contemplated visiting Russia on his northern travels in 1912. On investigation he found the old passport and presented it, silently hoping that the official knew no English. The man saw the American eagle at the top and remarked sagely, "Ah! That bird is all right. Let him pass."

As yet it was impossible to gauge the effect which the war would have upon those labors which were in great measure Dr. Damrosch's real life, but as always he sought to relate his own profession to the main stream of national energy. Long before the United States entered the struggle, he foresaw its course and wrote to General Leonard Wood to propose enlarging the department for bandmasters. The suggestion was received favorably, and he was invited to Washington for a conference, but affairs moved with distressing slowness. Not until September, 1918, was the Army ready to accept his plan, and even then none of the proper preparations had been made. Dr. Damrosch had, however, been offered a commission as a major, but the signing of the Armistice determined his remaining a private citizen.

To his regret the Army Band School remained under the Institute only a little longer. Captain Clappé, the principal, died in 1920; and in the following year General Pershing ordered the school transferred to Washington. Dr. Damrosch was left with the consciousness that he had again done pioneer work and the satisfying reflection that the Washington school was under the leadership of his own graduates.

He was saddened when musicians who were of German birth were treated like outcasts merely because they were

aliens. On April 3, 1917, the Kneisel Quartet played a final concert; their work was to be carried on by the scarcely less able Flonzaley Quartet, composed of two Italians, a Swiss, and a Belgian. For the last time, Louis Svecenski was the Kneisel spokesman: "We are leaving chamber music in the hands of our fellow artists, and it doesn't matter what countries they come from, so long as they are loyal to King Ludwig van Beethoven."

*The Chronicle*, in quite another spirit, published an article headed *Intern All German Music*, by a director of the New York Philharmonic Society. The editor, apparently in full accord with the chauvinistic author, wrote to various eminent musicians, including Dr. Damrosch, for corroboration—"in the hope that they will add their authoritative approval of this movement, to abolish the works of enemy composers." A musician could scarcely wish "to abolish the works of enemy composers"; but Dr. Damrosch, as one who was himself German born, might well have found a difficulty in expressing his objections. He performed the task without compromising his artistic honor: "Why deprive ourselves of the things that are good and beautiful at a time when the whole world cannot have too much of such things? . . . I refuse to believe that the American people are so unintelligent as to be unable to distinguish between the German militaristic government and Beethoven's music. . . . Nor will [Germany] be defeated by the persecution of harmless German artists, nor by efforts to incite a mob-spirit against works of art, which have nothing to do with German autocracy or militarism."

His belief in the moral implications of his art likewise forced him to go counter to popular opinion in the recurrent furore over the National Anthem, which he called bluntly, "A bad poem squeezed into a drinking song." It was always his opinion that the music of a song depended upon the words—that a noble and inspiring poem was the

prime necessity for a patriotic anthem, and he held a poor opinion of Francis Scott Key's verses. That he could candidly express such an opinion in wartime without provoking furious detraction was evidence of the respect in which he, a German-born musician, was held by all classes of people.

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE INSTITUTE OF MUSICAL ART: PART II (1918-1933)

THE ARMISTICE was signed; with the rest of the world, Frank Damrosch could reckon up what war had cost him. Connections and friends had suffered, but from his immediate family no toll had been exacted. On the contrary he could congratulate himself upon the fine unfolding of new leaves on the Damrosch tree, for he had now three grandsons, Leopold, Douglas, and Frank the third. Their father, Frank the second, was a much loved clergyman—a natural development in a descendant of Leopold Damrosch. His daughter Helen, though he had been disappointed because she had not her grandmother von Heimburg's voice, was beginning to make him exceedingly proud of her painting. The fortunes of nieces and nephews were developing satisfactorily, and in one of them, Leopold Damrosch Mannes, he had the joy of seeing a singular aptitude—perhaps genius—for what he reverently called the “best-loved art.”

But if those within the smaller circle had come through the war scatheless, he was not a man whom this could lightly console for the misfortunes of others. He had not been intimate with Dr. Karl Muck, but he had never believed him guilty of treason, and Muck was still in prison, while Johanna Gadske had fled in disgrace to Berlin. From Europe came sad stories of the poverty of musicians, depressing him the more because he knew how harmlessly these people had lived. Nor was all healthy in his own corner of the vineyard. He felt the altered temper of the

world, since its breath blew cold upon that spiritual child of his, the Musical Art Society.

He blamed himself in some degree for the blight which overtook it. He had expected at any moment to receive the army commission which would force him to devote all his time to the Bandmasters' School; and, in preparation for the summons, had found it necessary to focus his attention on the Institute, which he could not abandon without proper provision. He had therefore acquiesced in the suspension of the Musical Art Society's rehearsals for the duration. When, after the lapse of a year, efforts were being made to revive the Society, the devoted president Eugene Delano died, and without his care, the project languished. An arrangement of long standing provided that, should the Musical Art Society default in the two concerts to which it was pledged yearly, the endowment fund should be made over to the Institute of Musical Art. To have his school enriched by so considerable a sum was a solace, but he regarded the Musical Art Society as one of his most important contributions and \$50,000 could not purchase his satisfaction. Later he remarked sadly to Randall Thompson that something had got hold of people—they weren't the same—they had ceased to care for the same things.

He did not realize that the ideal was not extinct with the body which had first given it form. Within five years he had engaged the accomplished Margarete Dessoff, who had organized the Dessoffsche Frauenchor in Frankfort, to take charge of the choral music of the Institute. Her first group of madrigal singers numbered only sixteen voices, but their performances rivaled in studied perfection the past accomplishments of the Musical Art Society. In 1928 she founded the A Cappella Singers, a chorus of mixed voices, and he lived to witness and rejoice in new performances of polyphonic music.

Art for the people kept its familiar face for some time

after art for its own sake had assumed new features, probably because the former was less purely a music project. Dr. Damrosch had not regularly conducted the People's Choral Union since 1912, but had retained his keen interest. In February, 1917, he had gone to his old school, the College of the City of New York, to lead the chorus for the twenty-fifth anniversary concert. Excerpts were sung from works of the Union's history, from the *Elijah*, *St. Paul*, *Samson*, the *Messiah*, the *Creation*, the *Seasons*, and that old favorite, Bruch's *Song of the Bell*.

The celebration of the quarter century was marked by the publication of a handsome booklet, written by John M. Goodale, a founder of the People's Singing Classes, and Theodore Schorske, who had joined in 1893. It contained admirable biographical notes, a history of the movement, a list of works performed, and rolls of presidents, instructors, and accompanists. Among the seventy-two teachers only four deaths had occurred, of which three were those of pioneers, short-lived Abbie S. Lee and those devoted women, Mary L. Doty and Sara J. J. McCaffery.

The historical notes concluded with words as pertinent to the fiftieth anniversary of the People's Singing Classes as to the twenty-fifth: "Music has for everyone an unseen yoke of order, harmony and beauty. For us its burden and yoke have been those of the better order and the juster harmony, the order that would stay war and pestilence, the harmony that comforts sorrow, that helps reveal the final consonance of little things and great things, of living and of death."

Dr. Damrosch's conception of the place of music in the postwar world had been vigorously expressed in his 1918 commencement day address, while the burdens of war were pressing most heavily upon the United States: "When the war is over, music—our best-loved art—will help to make the world sane again: it will strengthen the founda-



tions of civilization which have been so grievously shaken: it will revive men's faith in their higher destiny, because it works upon their spiritual nature and takes their minds off the material cares of daily life. . . . Think not of yourselves, your personal advantage, or prestige, but like the soldier who offers his life for the nation's cause, give your life to better the conditions of existence, to console and hearten the grieving, to cheer the laborer, to uplift the downtrodden, to inspire the seeker after truth and goodness, and thus help to make the world a better place to live in."

None of his listeners could miss the extraordinary earnestness, even fervency with which he entreated these young friends, for whom he felt almost a father's love, not to make worldly success a primary object, but to go out among the people, to mining towns, among tenements, or to country villages. He promised that self-forgetfulness would not result in starvation. No man believed more firmly that to lose a life was to find it; even material blessings were not withheld from one who trod right ways. Long ago his father had written, "I would rather not be a musician, if I could not once in a while preach in the language of my art." To the sons of that father music was a primary function of the good life.

These years were not without disquieting changes in the Institute. The deaths of Rudolph E. Schirmer and Isaac N. Seligman, both of whom had been trustees from the foundation of the school, were personal losses to Dr. Damrosch. Money was not plentiful, and the salaries of teachers, never commensurate with their reputations, had to be reduced; the draft had diminished the enrollment; and a succession of secretaries disturbed the tranquillity of his private office until the appointment of Helen A. Frank as secretary of the Institute secured him a measure of peace.

When, before the site of the school was determined, he

had drawn up a list of five prime requisites, one had been an approach along which young women would not be subjected to annoyance. His fatherly solicitude was of course greater for the out-of-town girls who studied at the Institute, and he was delighted when the Parnassus Club—a name he chose himself—was founded to give these students a home in a near-by apartment house.

By this time, there were in existence four conveniently situated preparatory centers where young children received introductory training in piano or violin, in notation and sight-singing. The value of this work was intensified by throwing the Institute open to the pupils on Saturday mornings. Here they enjoyed the further benefits of orchestra practice, eurhythmics, class singing, and theory. When these children tried the entrance examinations, Dr. Damrosch was delighted to find how far they had progressed above the level of those applicants who lacked such preparation.

Two years after the Armistice, the sum of money accruing to the Institute from the defunct Musical Art Society, augmented by various bequests, made possible not only the restoration of prewar activities but the establishment of Harold Bauer's class in piano criticism and the chamber-music classes organized by Franz Kneisel and Louis Svecenski; classes for war veterans were conducted through the next four years, and the *Baton*, a school magazine of excellent quality, was founded, to flourish for a decade.

He had said, "I have a horror of politics in art." With some misgiving, he acted in opposition to a lifelong principle, when he was approached on a scheme for founding an art center in New York, with the Institute as the representative music school. The plan involved four city blocks, seventeen acres in coverage; the site, the landscaping, and care of the grounds were to be the responsibility of the

metropolitan commission; both industrial and fine arts would be given place. His imagination was fired by the magnificence of design; he could list immediately ten colleges of music which would come properly under the transferred Institute; there he might attain his ideal of a mighty civic chorus; was the Temple of Music at long last to become an actuality? He was not, however, greatly disappointed when the airy structure of plans collapsed. The events of life did occasionally disappoint, but never disillusioned him. If one hope failed, another sprang forward in its place; and when all expectation of personal good should fail, he could still look forward joyfully for others, and feel the path firm under his own feeble steps.

Helen Damrosch had spent the first six months of 1922 in British Guiana as an artist employed in the scientific expedition headed by Dr. William Beebe. She would be in Holland in July, and there her parents were trusted with her. Since they did not leave New York until after commencement, his sixty-third birthday was passed at sea. When they landed at Plymouth, they learned with great delight that the little Dutch steamer on which Helen was a passenger would touch at the English port. A surprise being thus in order, the father rose before dawn on the morning of July 4, and went out to the pier to whistle *Leitmotifs* until his signals roused his daughter.

She told him that she was engaged to John Tee-Van, a member of the expedition, a scientist who had already gone on five voyages. To the father the news was bitter-sweet, for his girl had always been very close to him. Even when she was away, he never altogether lost her presence because to read her letters was to hear her voice. Much of this would no doubt alter, perhaps vanish, but he could not be ungenerous, and would welcome Helen's husband as warmly as he had welcomed Frank's wife. Here, too, the

only loss was in the fear of it; he grew to be as fond of John Tee-Van as if he had been his own son.

But Helen was not married yet, and purposed not to be until next summer at Seal Harbor. Now she was going with her father and mother holidaying in Germany. They went first to Travemünde, where Uncle Paul von Heimbürg, who had been sure in 1914 that there was not money enough in the world to carry on a major war, was living the restricted life of a retired general. Travemünde looked poorer than they remembered it; and the longer they traveled in Germany, the more they were struck by evidences of want. Amazing bargains offered themselves in the shops, but Dr. Damrosch was too sensitive to enjoy the privilege of buying for almost nothing what had obviously cost someone else a great deal, and abandoning his plans, he crossed the German border into Switzerland with a sense of escape. He had had a talk with James Loeb in Murnau during which the two formulated a plan to raise a fund for indigent artists, so that now he could, with a good conscience, forget their plight while he climbed mountains with Helen and enjoyed a reunion with the Mannes family.

Next summer, on July 17, 1923, Helen was married to John Tee-Van at Seal Harbor, the place all the Damrosches loved best. When her husband was not absent on long expeditions, he kept office hours at the Bronx Zoological Gardens, employment which allowed the old pattern to be followed in the choice of an apartment under the family roof.

Dr. Damrosch had begun to feel the need of an additional out-of-town vacation in late winter or in early spring. In March, 1924, he took a Jamaican holiday with his wife. A stormy voyage was followed by an idyllic interval of ten days. In 1925, since Europe was insufficiently recovered for him to wish to revisit it, the Damrosches took a journey,

a "western way," as they called the passage from Seal Harbor to the Kneisels' cottage, but one far longer—it took them through the Canadian Rockies, to Mt. Rainier, where the view was desecrated by "an awful crowd of Elks" holding a convention, down to San Francisco, and as far as Hawaii, where one of the happiest months of his life was spent in scenes of beauty and in good fellowship. His capacity for enjoyment, far from weakening with the years, seemed intensified as if he had taught himself to abstain from either the forward or the backward glance while he made all he could of the moment's fleeting charm.

At Grand Canyon on the homeward journey he conceived the hazardous ambition of riding horseback alone down into the Canyon and up again. He had been seeing too much of people and coveted solitude and a glimpse of beauty undisturbed. He crossed on the suspension bridge and spent that night in a comfortable camp. Early next morning he recrossed the bridge and rode until he found a promising trail which, painfully followed, brought him up to the brink of the canyon. Expert horseman as he was, it tried his mettle to keep the path, but when he reached the goal and gazed around him, he told himself that he had done well; the scenes before him were a recompense for toil. That night, when he and his wife had settled themselves in the drawing room of a train booked to leave for Colorado Springs at one in the morning, he suffered a first heart attack. As the pain subsided, Mrs. Damrosch, determined to take him back to New York as soon as possible, sent for the conductor and asked that they be transferred to the Chicago train, an arrangement which was quickly made. At the Chicago station, the kind forethought of railway officials placed him in a luxurious private car on the XXth Century Express. There are few attentions to which theatrical and musical folk are more susceptible than those which mitigate the discomforts of

travel. Dr. Damrosch said, rather touchingly, that no greater courtesy or consideration could have been shown a millionaire.

Testimonial dinners all too often bring to the ears of the honored guest the hurried steps of time. The pleasure which he has in them is tintured with anxiety while he asks himself: When did the world praise anyone whose work was not finished? Unless it is one whose work never possessed real value? The second carking thought could not occur to a man who was modestly certain that he had early and correctly found his mission; but when the Institute gave Dr. Damrosch a testimonial dinner in 1926, he could not help thinking seriously of his age and of the heart attack of the previous summer. The dinner was fixed for January 16, the birthday of his mother and of Betty Loeb, and was preceded by the usual memorial concert at which Franz Kneisel's String Ensemble played Beethoven's *Quintette in C Major* and the Madrigal Choir sang motets of Sweelinck and Gabrieli and madrigals of Zanchius and Hassler.

After a program which was peculiarly satisfying because it proved that the work he had begun with the Musical Art Society was going bravely on, came dinner and then the speeches which commenced at midnight and broke off at a quarter past one. Paul Cravath, a trustee who had been constantly engaged in school affairs, acted as toastmaster. The much liked Percy Goetschius, retired a year earlier from the department of theory and composition, had returned to represent the faculty and to present the director with a silver loving cup. The newly appointed head of the department of composition in the Juilliard Graduate School, Rubin Goldmark, spoke for the musicians of New York. There were bonds of sympathy between Goldmark and Dr. Damrosch, for both had done pioneer work in Colorado and both had studied with Joseffy, although Gold-

mark, who was considerably the younger man, had been with Joseffy when he was an established teacher and Frank had merely been permitted "to take lessons" in order to help out a poor sixteen-year-old boy. But Goldmark was a prime favorite because of his close connection with the Bohemians, a club of which Dr. Damrosch thought highly. Goldmark, capable of appreciating self-abnegation, praised with gracious words his colleague who had deliberately turned away from the glory of this present world in order to devote his life to shaping a better future. There were many speeches, but none of undue length. Paul and Felix Warburg spoke with a mixture of mirth and sentiment; their brother-in-law James Loeb had, as so often in the past, sent a cable; and an affectionate message came from Louis Svecenski, formerly of the Kneisel Quartet, ill now with only a few months to live. Mr. George Wedge, the present dean of the Institute, spoke for the alumni, W. J. Henderson represented the music critics of New York, and Mr. John Wilkie, in behalf of the trustees, paid a tribute to Mrs. Damrosch. Her husband's response was expressive of honest gratitude to these dear friends and helpers. He acknowledged his almost lifelong sense of his vocation as music's forerunner, spoke tenderly of his mother, coupling her with that other mother whose birthday they had that evening celebrated, and ended by saying that his head buzzed with future plans; he hoped he could carry out some of them before he had to leave his bronze effigy to supervise the school.

So he and his wife went home, laden down with good wishes for long life and happiness. He did not disquiet her by expressing any opinion on the ominous finality of such celebrations, or by remarking that Malvina Hoffman's austere handsome bust struck him as a distinctly funerary object.

He was prepared for change, but the calamity of Franz



Kneisel's death two months after the testimonial dinner shocked him profoundly. Kneisel was a younger man than he, and the illness had been brief; he had died of peritonitis after a week's suffering. Winter and summer had seen the families' intimacy; the first voyage of the *Polly* each season was over "the western way" to the Kneisels' cottage at Blue Hill.

His personal sorrow could not make him unmindful of the irreparable loss to the school whose original faculty had been formed about the nucleus of the Kneisel Quartet. With his usual sagacity he secured Leopold Auer. Since that veteran would be eighty-one in June, the connection could scarcely be regarded as permanent, nor could more be asked of the gifted old man than a biweekly visit. Yet good fortune attended the arrangement. Each time the master came to the Institute he remained two hours during which he heard four pupils play, so that in the course of a week eight promising students had the privilege of his criticisms. Nor had the engagement the expected brevity, for Auer did not die until after his eighty-fifth birthday.

Thus the loss of Franz Kneisel was not compensated, but bridged over. A greater change threatened, one which Kneisel's friendship would have helped him to meet. The Institute, which he had planted like a tender vine in soil he had prepared for its reception, which he had cultivated for twenty years, was to be grafted on another stem—was to be joined with the Juilliard Graduate School. Ceasing to be the sole authority, he would be the Dean of the Institute under the President of the Juilliard School of Music, Dr. John Erskine, a man twenty years his junior, who possessed considerable gifts as littérateur and musician.

The change had not come because the Institute had failed to prosper, but was, on the contrary, largely due to its success. The enrollment had more than trebled, necessitating the building of an annex, and there were so many

celebrities among the alumni that Dr. Damrosch laughingly excused himself from giving a list, lest by naming some he seem to slur others. But his Institute, long a pioneer in music culture, had now to reckon with other schools patterned on his own. Curtis in Philadelphia and Eastman's in Rochester enjoyed far greater endowments, and though these were too distant actively to rival the Institute, the Juilliard Graduate School, backed literally by millions, offered courses corresponding to the Artists' Courses of the Institute. The merger would enrich both schools: the Institute needed more money and the Graduate School would function better if it could draw from an undergraduate department. Dr. Damrosch took a characteristic stand; union would advance the good cause and therefore he would welcome it. But a situation had developed about which he could say little without wounding others or losing something of his own dignity. On the morning when he was prepared to announce to the students that the Institute would be affiliated with the Juilliard Graduate School, he asked his secretary if she thought there would be grief at the change, and when she replied that some would take it much to heart, he said cheerfully, "Then we must act as if we were all very happy about it."

As soon as commencement was over, he sailed for Europe with his wife, adding to the ostensible business of hunting teachers the private search for something to heal a wearied spirit. He spent his sixty-eighth birthday in Travemünde with the von Heimbürgs and went on to Berlin. While staying in the capital, he and Mrs. Damrosch went out to Grünewald to visit Fritz Kreisler in his fine house, and then to call upon Lilli Lehmann. Forty-five years had passed since he and Walter had sung *Leitmotifs* as they traversed the suburban streets hunting for Lilli's villa. She was now eighty-four, but still gave lessons, sometimes fifteen a day. When she recognized Frank,

whom she had known when he was scarcely out of boyhood, she threw her arms around his neck and cried again and again, "My *dear* Frank! My *good* Frank!" while her still lovely eyes overflowed with tears at her reunion with the past.

He was greatly attached to his wife's cousin, General Herman Meyer, whom they visited in Thuringia. War had left him a broken old man; this, too, was a last reunion. But the Thuringian country, especially the forest drives, gave the Damrosches compensating happiness. They hired a peasant to take them about in a small open carriage, and he, trusting his horse to find the way, amused his passengers by blowing folk-songs on a trumpet. He bragged that he knew every German song, and so great was his exhibition of repertory that the Damrosches ended by half-believing him.

In England on the homeward way, they joined Helen and her husband, John Tee-Van. In the previous winter Harold Bauer had invited them all to a dinner party with a number of English musicians, and now, many months later, the engagement was handsomely kept. Mr. Bauer and Dr. Damrosch were excellent friends and enjoyed interminable conversations on subjects which bore no relation to the "best-loved art." After dinner it was difficult to separate them long enough for the host and Myra Hess to play to the company on two pianos.

On these later visits to England and the Continent, Dr. Damrosch was able to spend more time in art galleries. He and his wife had always enjoyed looking at paintings, and their daughter's career gave them an immediate interest. She had collaborated with him in a book of children's songs for which she furnished charming illustrations in color.

Two years later, when the Institute had become firmly embedded in the Juilliard School, he and his wife went

abroad with little expectation of doing any business except that of bettering his health by resting and drinking the waters at Mergentheim in Franconia. This birthday, too, was passed at sea, and the captain of the *Resolute* was host at his party. The evening after landing at Cuxhaven, there was a family reunion in a Hamburg hotel, Manneses, Seymours, von Heimburgs, and Damrosches gathering after the old pattern; but Dr. and Mrs. Damrosch spent most of the summer quietly by themselves in Mergentheim. It was pleasant to be the only Americans in the kindly, old-fashioned village where nothing but German was spoken and all things bore the stamp of a simplicity like that of a century earlier. They were delighted to discover an old house where Beethoven had stayed the night when he came to play the cathedral organ. The Damrosches lived in the rest-house, which owned a little theater where good plays were well performed, although the entertainment which gave him the greatest pleasure was an open-air concert with a program of Johann Strauss's waltzes, conducted by a nephew of the "Waltz King." Dr. Damrosch had always delighted in dancing—Mrs. Gustav Mahler had called him the only good dancer in America—and he was sorry that Americans had strayed from Strauss to the outlandish cacophonies of jazz.

As good folk grow into old age, they find a melancholy sweetness in gentle reminders of life's close, not in those distresses of body which occupy the mind to the exclusion of better thoughts, but in quiet natural scenes and memorials of others who have long been dead. There was a day when, wandering in company with his wife, he found a lonely grave on a high hill. Solitary as was the situation, it gave a distant view of the village set in its fields, as if the one who was buried there still kept a kindly interest in mundane affairs. On the monument were engraved three lines in German which the Damrosches liked enough to

copy: He who is gone will never more return; but as he passed, he shed a light behind him, brightening the path which others had to climb.\*

From Germany they went as usual into Switzerland, and in Interlaken called upon the two Schumann sisters, who were poor and felt themselves slighted or forgotten, but were not altogether pleased to have "rich Americans" remember their existence. Dr. Damrosch came away in a rare mood of depression. Something he could do to help the neglected old children of genius, and he did it, as years ago he had assisted the eight spinster daughters of Karl Reinecke, and in the recent past many another troubled dependent on the precarious art.

Later that summer he met his oldest grandson, sixteen-year-old Leopold Damrosch. They went together to Biarritz, where they heard *Carmen* and saw a bullfight which left them pale, but dogged. He revisited Paris in the boy's company and found the city, which he had never much liked, a place of mild enchantment.

In the autumn the People's Choral Union staged a grand reunion dinner. Two hundred former members appeared from various parts of the country, and, since some of them had not seen each other for many years, the name-tags which each wore saved much embarrassment. It was a little sad to glance at a face which had at last sight been young and fresh; occasionally the name on the tag seemed an incredible jest; but on the whole everyone accepted changes with more mirth than regret. Some one started the dear first song which Dr. Damrosch taught them, *Oh, how lovely is the evening!* The pioneer teachers were long since dead, but many of their successors were present, and, since it was evident that Dr. Damrosch's strength must not

\* The Reverend Frank Damrosch translates the epitaph thus:

That which passeth, not returning,  
Leaves in parting, flaming, burning  
Light which glows far down the years.

be overtaxed, it was suggested that each lead one song. After the songs were sung, someone made a speech which made the tears, not very far from falling all the evening, overflow: he told them that in each heart there was a monument to Dr. Damrosch which would last longer than marble or bronze, because he had done more than teach them how to sing; they had looked up to him standing above them on the platform and thought how good and just and loving he was, and had known that his spirit blessed them then and would forever bless them.

He was very happy. Their love and gratitude wrapped him like a warm, soft cloak. If he was growing old, so were these friends, and in their company he felt no terrifying breath of change, no crowding of the future eager to displace the present. So felicitous an occasion must be repeated, and a second reunion came when he stood in need of comfort.

A great misfortune had overtaken him during the summer. While he was playing chess with his wife, he said in a puzzled tone, "I cannot see out of my right eye." Vision returned, but briefly. They went next day to New York to consult his oculist and passed a sorry twenty-four hours in a hospital, after which they returned to Seal Harbor to school themselves into patient acceptance of the inevitable, for the loss of the right eye would be permanent. He made no complaint but said quietly that he would not again sail the *Polly*. Without his boat Seal Harbor was an altered place, and he was not sorry when it was time to return to New York for the winter.

In November he went to the second reunion of the People's Choral Union. Perhaps none of his old friends knew of his affliction, but their presence helped him to bear it. He was much pleased when a charming poem in free verse was read. It had been dedicated to his wife as a bouquet from the garden of their hearts. If he had sup-



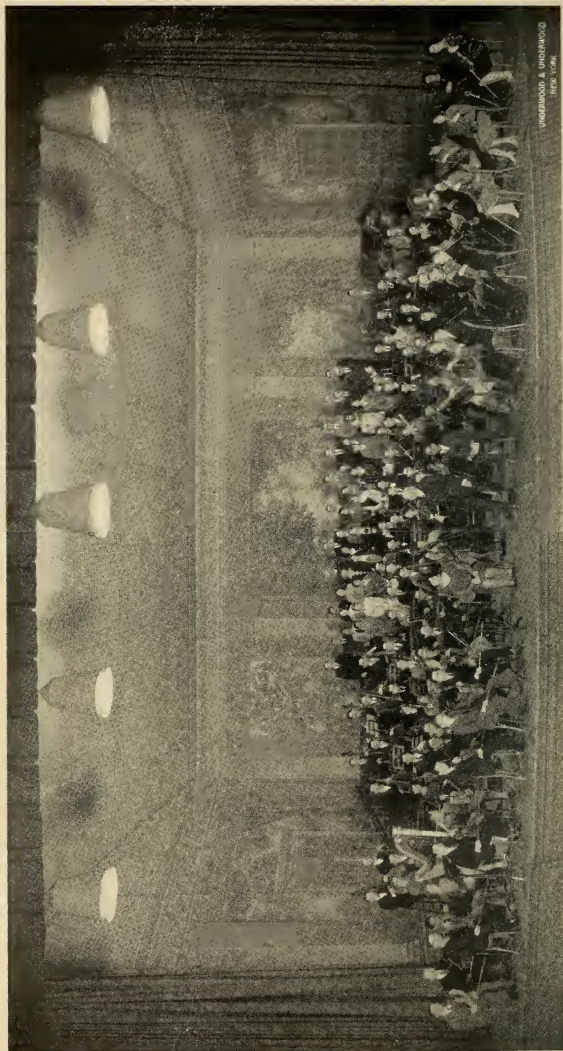


STUDENTS OF THE U. S. ARMY MUSIC SCHOOL OF THE INSTITUTE OF MUSICAL ART,  
AT GOVERNOR'S ISLAND, WITH FRANH DAMROSCH AND CAPTAIN ARTHUR A. CLAPPÉ,  
HEAD OF THE ARMY MUSIC SCHOOL



THE INSTITUTE OF MUSICAL ART  
120 CLAREMONT AVE.  
NEW YORK CITY





UNDERWOOD & UNDERWOOD  
NEW YORK

STUDENT ORCHESTRA AND CHORUS, INSTITUTE OF MUSICAL ART, COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES, 1929  
FRANK DAMROSCH, CONDUCTING



RECITAL HALL—INSTITUTE OF MUSICAL ART



posed that the cords between him and his old friends had frayed almost to breaking in the intervening years, he knew now that the bond had strengthened.

There was romance in these assemblies. Some recalled with nostalgia the days when they were young; others recognized Dr. Damrosch as the best influence of their early lives. All of them had been touched by his generous spirit. Not content with holding out his own life in both hands, he had given them a share in his family. How often he had said, "If you sing well today, next Sunday you shall have a special treat!" and when the day came, there, ready to play to them, were his sister and her husband, Mr. David Mannes, with the wonderful violin which had belonged to Dr. Leopold Damrosch. Sometimes his brother Walter had looked in on them, and Herman Mosenthal, who was Mrs. Damrosch's father, used to come regularly and play the piano. Dr. Damrosch's interest went far beyond Sunday rehearsals and concerts. Mature men and women could appraise as they had not done in youth the pains he had taken to place deserving voices in paid choirs and to secure, for as many as wished, concert seats at low prices. So all in all, the reunion was a love feast.

The year 1930 marked the end of the first quarter century of the Institute of Musical Art. The school magazine, the *Baton*, issued an anniversary number in honor of Dr. Damrosch, the trustees presented the school with his portrait in oils, there were concerts at the Institute, concerts at Carnegie and Town Halls, and a dinner given him by the Bohemians at the Commodore Hotel. If age and broken health could find their cure in honors, he would have been young and well again. At it was, his sensitive spirit did not miss the something of finality, the sound of the voice crying, Hail and farewell!

Progress at the Institute was constantly marked by worrying change. The original building, although not large,

was elegant and chaste. The annex of 1924 had not destroyed its beauty, but now much more room was needed and the annex, the mansard roof, and the top floor of the building proper were to be demolished in order to conform to another, set up cheek by jowl on adjacent property. Since all this meant advancement of the good cause, he accepted it cheerfully, but with depressed consciousness that the outward grace of the Institute would be permanently impaired and that the difficulties of arranging for lessons during the alterations, of moving and of settlement, would be almost insuperable.

In the summer he sailed on the *Bremen* with his wife, a last voyage to Europe undertaken to regain, if possible, strength to go on working, something at least of refreshment for the jaded spirit. It proved a happy summer. From Hamburg they went to Salzburg and met Mrs. Gericke and her daughter. His old friend, Wilhelm Gericke, had been dead five years, but Gericke had been born fourteen years earlier than Frank Damrosch: as people grow old, they become adept in arithmetic, involuntarily subtracting their ages, first from seventy, later from that of those friends who like themselves have passed the arbitrary barrier; one asks himself, marveling, Can I then really be old?

Most of the summer was spent with the Gerickes near Hallein, then celebrating its seven hundredth anniversary, in the *Schloss* of Countess Thun, who became one of the Damrosches' best-loved friends. Among her paying guests was Bruno Walter, with whom an old acquaintance grew into friendship. Since Salzburg was within easy distance, Dr. Damrosch was able to enjoy most of the performances at which Walter conducted. For Walter's work, he had nothing but praise, especially for a moving presentation of *Fidelio*. The composer of *Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht* lies buried in Hallein. Dr. Damrosch, who had made it his

practice to open every Christmas concert with his own arrangement of the carol, visited Gruber's grave and could have wished it Christmas Eve so that he might have watched the village children carry their lighted candles to the grave and circle it while they sang the old song.

The homeward voyage undid the summer's good. He was unable to be at the Institute when it opened, and though by degrees he grew better and resumed his work, he passed a difficult winter. When summer came, he went for the last time to Seal Harbor. The little town had given scope to homely talents which New York had not called forth. In Seal Harbor he had been the first to ride on the beautiful red fire engine because his services had earned him the distinction. He was several times president of the Village Improvement Society and was given most credit for the purchase of the sprinkling cart. Seal Harbor felt like home to him. He was glad when his many friends, famous musicians with names known all over the world, arrived in early summer, and regretted their autumnal departures; and yet, when they were gone, he was richly content to feel that Seal Harbor was again secured to his own family and the folk who lived there the year round. But now he could not sail the *Polly*, the coast was damp, the fog pervasive, and he acquiesced quietly in the doctor's suggestion that thereafter he should spend the summers in a warmer climate. The next year he tried Bermuda, where Helen and his son-in-law were engaged in tropical research, but he was forced to return to New York in August. Again with patient fortitude he husbanded his strength and for one more year carried on his work at the Institute.

For a long time he had been coming down the mountain, but now the worst of the descent was over. Now he no longer thought: Soon I shall be well; I shall be able to go on working. In the spring of 1933 he knew the truth and found that he could bear it—he had finished his course.



#### CHAPTER XIV

### EINE KLEINE NACHTMUSIK

(1933-1937)

ON COMMENCEMENT DAY of 1933, Frank's last class of young graduates went out from the Institute into the larger world. He, too, was going out, though not as they were. He was passing at last into the inaction he dreaded; it was his time of parting and farewell. When he spoke for the last time to his students he did not suffer alone; a phrase, tender and regretful, was breathed from one to another among faculty and graduates; it was said that the soul of the Institute was departing. Admiration of his rare talents as executive and musicologist had long since deepened to personal love for the man of good will. If he seemed stern, it was now recognized that his anger was never caused by umbrage at an affront to himself, but resulted from his exalted attitude to music—the ideal must not suffer insult or diminution.

Idleness was going to be very difficult for a man who had worked hard all his life, and done his best to make others work too for the good cause. So short a time ago he had said to his graduates, "If one is too tired after a hard day's teaching to play a little chamber music, then other people are no doubt too tired after a busy day to attend concerts; and if other people are too tired to attend concerts or to listen to their friends play, *what will become of the Art of Music?*"

His boyhood friend, Otto Eidlitz, had been dead five years; the voice of Paul Warburg, wise counselor of the Institute, was silent this twelvemonth; Franz Kneisel, dearest among musicians, had long since departed; James Loeb,



that princely lover of learning and of art, had died in Germany three weeks before Frank Damrosch took his leave of the work loved more than life. He was lonely without these old friends, but in his incessant weariness, he could not be sorry when he remembered that all their pain and languor lay behind them—his own was too much with him. As each stepped resolutely out of life's turmoil, his thought took shape in scriptural phrase, "The burden and the heat of the day are over for him, and his is the peace that passeth all understanding."

There was little in the outer world to tranquillize the mind of an old man actuated by humanitarian impulse. At home the Depression was cramping life, and art was, as always, first to feel the numbing touch of curtailed opportunity. Abroad, artists suffered not only from poverty but political persecution. As formerly he had stood out against injustice to foreign musicians in wartime America, so now in early spring he had signed with other notables a cable to Adolf Hitler protesting the treatment accorded musicians in Germany: "We beg of you to consider that the artist all over the world is estimated for his talent alone and not for his national or religious convictions"—and with more of adroitness than belief—"We are convinced that such persecutions as take place in Germany at present are not based on your instructions, and that it cannot possibly be your desire to damage the high cultural esteem Germany, until now, has been enjoying in the eyes of the whole civilized world."

Dr. Damrosch had another task to perform for his beloved Institute, one which, though arduous, did much to console him during the first two years of retirement. Dr. Erskine had urged him to write the history of the school. No one else was so well qualified to tell the story of its beginnings and early triumphs: for him, it was like writing his memoirs or the life of one of his own children. For

many months he frequented the library of the Institute, checking facts and figures, consulting files of old letters. To see him working there warmed the hearts of his old colleagues and the students who had known him in earlier days, but their pleasure was touched with sadness, for he looked frail and ill. The result of his work was an interesting, lucid history of the first twenty-eight years of the Institute of Musical Art. His style was what it had always been, serious and yet pleasant; he had always said a little less than he felt and had never striven for any effect except that which inevitably results from a plain tale truly told. Once again the Institute had reason to be grateful.

Thus he finished the tasks which the world had set him and, in his quiet, humorous way, announced himself as henceforth given over to the contemplation of past joys. Yet no one knew better than he that work remained to be done, grueling, difficult work, hardly possible of accomplishment had he not always put the things of the spirit before the things of the flesh. For it appeared he must go on living for an indefinite period, during which he would have bouts of suffering, the anticipation of which was most grievous, regret the happier times, be, as he called it, "on the shelf," superseded, perhaps forgotten; and he must bear all this with grace, and, so far as he could, keep those who loved him from being unhappy. And all this he accomplished. He may have thought that he was done with music, but the most dulcet melodies are not those audible to the outer ear. The upward glance and smile when his wife entered the room, the patience through weary days and easeless nights, the unfailing interest with which he listened to the talk of his friends, made quiet music of his life's remainder—a little night music.

Nor had all joys departed. When he looked up to welcome his wife, it was often from the pages of a book, one which he had never before found time to read. The sight

of his right eye was gone, but he made uncomplaining shift to do with the left, while use, as always, increased its power. He liked the keen discussion of world politics and was not above enjoying the details of home life. He continued to take pleasure in younger people. His doctor in Stockbridge, his new summer home, called him Uncle Frank; his son-in-law was his great friend, his son and his son's wife, his "three fine grandsons," as he used to call them, Leopold, Douglas, Frank—and Mary, who was his "darling granddaughter," his own dear girl, innumerable nephews and nieces, all these made shifting jeweled patterns on the curtain of approaching night.

In these years he strengthened his firm friendship with the playwright, Sidney Howard, whose wife was a daughter of Dr. Walter Damrosch. A peculiar happiness may be achieved in such a relation between people of different generations; each rejoices to feel the chasm bridged; meetings are looked forward to with tranquil hope. In this case the elder man roused the creative impulse in the younger, who used often to say that he never left Uncle Frank without wanting to write a story about him. No one listened to their long, quiet talks on lawn or verandah, but those who looked out upon them went away contented.

Dearest of all relationships was that to the wife of his youth. Little has been said of her, because she feared lest, seeing her, the reader should miss something of him. She was, as she had always been, the most devoted of women. Age had transformed without diminishing her beauty, her way was gracious, and she could make even her anxieties and griefs into something charmingly her own. In the past he had been much away from her, but now he was all hers. One seldom left the house without the other.

Each family bond held firm. When Walter's opera, *The Man Without a Country*, had its première, Frank asked to have his dress suit fetched and, after arraying him-

self with all the old nicety, sallied forth to his place in the family box. His second birthday after resigning from the Institute was spent in town, where he waited to turn over to the publishers his completed manuscript. Walter came to visit him the evening before, bringing with him a magnum of champagne. Did the brothers remember the Wagner lecture which Walter had delivered for the benefit of baby Frank? With Hetty they had celebrated the event with champagne and supper at the hotel. Now baby Frank was forty-seven years old, the father of four young Damrosches. Did they remember the Berlin birthday of 1891, when Walter had surprised his brother with a cake garlanded with red roses and cherries, and taken him and little Uncle "Jujú" out for a fine dinner with champagne? Roses and cherries—symbols of family love to the elder brother—champagne—a *Leitmotif* for generous Walter; who ever poured the wine of life with finer courtesy?

The elder brother still kept tryst with his old friends of the People's Choral Union, although he could not altogether disguise the effort it cost him. His voice lost the familiar resonance and quavered slightly as he said, "You must carry on. Thinking about you helps me to go on living." Those who knew and loved him best found it singularly in keeping with his character that he should rise a second time to praise the work of the chorus, although he was evidently too weak to make the exertion easily.

The passing years saw acquiescence change into content. He refused to lament Seal Harbor, and found much merit in Stockbridge. His cottage gave a view of meadowlands and not too distant hills; he enjoyed drives of some length and went with considerable zest to matinees at the town theater, where a front seat was always reserved for him, although he could not always occupy it. Nor did he feel gloomy, as many old people do, when a birthday approached; indeed, he seemed to anticipate it with the eager-

ness of the little lad who had looked forward to a feast of cherries. The People's Choral Union never failed to send him a box of red roses, one for each year. He liked very much to have them massed about his room and to look at them—and remember.

On the day he was seventy-five, he asked his daughter to write down some conclusions he had reached in thinking over his three quarters of a century. He wished, it seemed, to put himself on record, and although he still wrote copiously, he preferred to have her place his thoughts on paper as he brought them out. This good man, far from feeling he had been the sport of chance, saw his life as a distinct pattern shaped from within and guided from without. In his youth in the West he had looked upward with loving wonder at the mesa; now it was as though he had risen to its height and, standing upright upon the verge, looked down on the country through which his life ran like the silver river. Below, the land fell into sections like the states of a little kingdom: surely design, not chance, had fixed those boundaries. Very clear, but small and farthest off, lay his fair childhood in Germany, once the home of poets, philosophers, and the mightiest masters of his best-loved art. The stream flowed on with less tranquillity through the province of restless youth, a boy's school days, a young man's life in the raw West. As it approached under his coign of vantage, he saw the rapids of his middle years, the Opera shallows, the rocks of enterprises undertaken as a means of livelihood, the hopeful inlet of the public schools, the lovely twin islands of his People's Singing Classes and the Musical Art Society. Latest of lands and nearest to him, but seen with less precision, lay the beloved creation of his maturity and age, the Institute which had been for thirty years his "sole care, thought, and objective." If to be thus and to see thus

meant "being on the shelf," what better could a wise old man require?

The last summer he spent in Stockbridge, a more or less confessed invalid. He cared little for driving, but enjoyed sitting out upon the lawn and looking away toward the hills. He spoke often of his mother, and told his daughter countless pleasant anecdotes of musicians he had known in his childhood, of foreign customs and old ways. In the 1890's he had said to a reporter, "I have been happy." In old age he could still say it, and the word was often on his lips. On October 11, while the family were driving from Stockbridge to the New York residence, he said reflectively, "It has been the happiest summer I have had in a long time."

There would be no more summers. Only eleven days were left for them to be together. He used jokingly to call 22 the Damrosches' lucky number, because his father had been born on the twenty-second and so had he; his father had set out for America on the twenty-second, and he himself had landed there upon that day. He would not have thought it an ill omen that he should die upon another twenty-second; it would have suited him to pass upon his father's birthday—and on October 22, 1937, one hundred and five years after the first Leopold Damrosch came into this world, his oldest child went out of it.

The funeral services differed sharply from his father's magnificent obsequies; their brief simplicity marked the altered taste of the half century. Probably none of the four hundred who crowded the recital room of the Institute had come for any reason except to show affection and respect. His own son, an Episcopalian clergyman, officiated. The Musical Art Quartet, foster child of his old age, played the *Andante* of Mozart's *C Major Quartet* as the coffin covered with red roses was carried up the aisle. Then his son read the first six verses of the fourteenth chapter of



John. These comfortable words speak to all sorrowing hearts, but there was something peculiarly appropriate to the Damrosch family in the hospitable assurance, "In my father's house are many mansions." Two short prayers followed, and the brief service was rounded out by the *Adagio* from Haydn's *C Major Quartet*. The C Major of this life was over. Presently Chopin's *Funeral March* sounded from the bells of the Riverside Church, and the visitors dispersed. The interment in the family lot in Woodlawn was private.

There were wearying days marked by respectful newspaper comment, sincere articles, many telegrams, numberless letters. Then everything seemed over except the enduring sadness of those who loved him best. His wife said in her grief, "The world will forget him, because it is not a world that remembers," and checked the thought which marred her faith in him. But, should the world indeed forget and did he know himself forgotten, nothing could have less power to trouble him. He had neither courted nor enjoyed publicity. The students had called the Institute the "Damrosch School"; if now they should give it the more formal title, he would not feel affronted. The name of the altar is Music; let the name of the high priest be blotted out, so long as the sacred flame is kept alive.

Nothing is lost. His work goes on. It is true that of his creations the Institute alone exists in recognizable form as he devised it. That, too, will alter, since only the ideal is constant; the embodiment of the ideal must suffer change, but Proteus in all his shapes is Proteus still. Though in his later years the Musical Art Society was but a memory, other groups sang the Bach *B Minor Mass*; church choirs and college glee clubs continued to enrich the world with *a cappella* music. The People's Choral Union lived on in varied forms, many of them apparent but others difficult to identify. The teachable spirit of the poor emigrants for



whom he had organized the Singing Classes had, in later generations, been broken by the impact of American materialism. The radio and moving picture had vulgarized and contented many. They would rather see than do. Observant of these changes and undiscouraged by them, he had prophesied that the old spirit would inform other groups from which would arise "the new giants," composers fit to stand beside the mighty dead.

The responsibility of the founder of the Musical Art Society, the People's Singing Classes, and the Institute of Musical Art long ago passed from his hands into those for whose well-being he spent his whole life. Of the Singing Classes alone there are an estimated fifty thousand living graduates. Many of them have nobly carried on his work; children have been brought up to know the worth of music, and life is less acrid for them than for others in these bitter days; they have hope of a future. Yet it would be well to remember that Frank Damrosch, once "the greatest choral missionary alive," was not content with seed sown in a flowerpot: the world was the field he would choose for his disciples.

With all his striving, his life, as he said tranquilly, had been "happy." The best gifts of destiny had been his—the full tale of years, high honors, the joy which comes from successful work, the love of friends and family. But these blessings had never been the first objects of struggle; they were graces found along the way. What he had really wanted was very simple—to make the world better through music, the instrument in which he had most faith.

The aim, indeed, was simple; but its realization was uncertain, because it did not depend on him alone. The musicianship for which he strove cannot be attained by passive attendance at the concert hall, nor by the increase of the private record collection. It is a musicianship at once ac-

tive and vital, gained not merely by hearing music, but by making it. In his time he accomplished all that a man could well do; yet the permanent worth of his achievement hangs in the balance. The most indifferent cannot mistake the nature of Frank Damrosch's musical ideal, but its vindication rests with all who have felt its influence.

## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

THE CHIEF sources for the biography of Frank Heino Damrosch are found in the collection of unpublished documents and other memorabilia in the possession of the Damrosch family. In addition to a considerable volume of correspondence which has been made available to the authors in the most liberal and farseeing manner, this collection contains several documents of a specifically biographical character, among which the informal memoirs written by Dr. Damrosch for his grandchildren occupy the most important place. These recollections afford a degree of insight into the mind of their author and assist in evaluating outward events in their relation to his own spiritual development. Other family records on a smaller scale supplement the autobiography and to some extent broaden its perspective. Leopold Damrosch, on his graduation from the Posen Gymnasium in 1849, was required to submit an autobiographical essay of some twelve pages, to which Dr. Frank Damrosch later wrote an addendum embodying what he remembered his father to have said further concerning his earlier life—regrettably little, for the elder Damrosch disliked recalling his unhappy youth. Leopold's half brother, the "Uncle Juju" of later years, wrote a biographical poem in honor of his mother's hundredth birthday which likewise relates something of the family history and of Leopold's medical training in Berlin. "Tante's Story," written in old age by Marie von Heimburg, tells nearly all that is known of the von Heimburg family, illuminates the early life of the Damrosch children, and traces the general course of family events. To these earlier narratives Mrs. Frank Damrosch has added agreeable accounts of travel and a poignant story of her husband's last years.

Most of the earlier Damrosch correspondence was destroyed in the warehouse fire of 1885—notably twelve letters from Richard Wagner, and all those written by Frank to his mother from Denver. Still extant are a number of letters from Leopold Damrosch to his sister-in-law Marie, written while he was touring the West in the spring of 1883; an important letter written in 1871 to a friend in Breslau; and letters written by his wife Helene from Berlin and other European cities. Old friends of the family have courteously submitted letters of Dr. Frank Damrosch, among which those from Denver to his boyhood friend Ed Wiener are the most informative. Of utmost importance is the series of letters addressed by Frank Damrosch to his wife, from Berlin and Bayreuth in 1891, and from Skibo Castle, the Carnegie seat, in 1901. Other letters to his daughter Helen, and those of his wife to their children, have supplied some needed information, but have been of more assistance in revealing the wise and affectionate spirit of the man. Almost no use has been made of personal letters to Frank Damrosch from his wide circle of celebrated acquaintances; though important to the biography of their writers, few were germane to the present work. An exception is the official correspondence with Major General Leonard Wood, Colonel John S. Broadley, and others in regard to the Bandmasters' School in the first World War.

Next in importance to these unpublished documents are six large volumes of newspaper clippings compiled by Mrs. Damrosch. The care and impartiality with which she preserved all notices, favorable or not, from the time of her marriage in 1888 until her husband's virtual retirement from public concert appearances in 1918, deserve especial commendation. With these scrapbooks, which saved the authors an infinity of time and trouble, may be mentioned the typewritten minutes of the People's Choral Union and those of the Musical Art Society, embracing the years 1893-

1903, and the valuable notes of Mr. Theodore Schorske. Manuscripts of lectures delivered by Dr. Damrosch have also yielded valuable assistance.

Among essential published works, those of Dr. Damrosch himself again claim first place. In addition to the charming treatise *Some Essentials in the Teaching of Music*, dedicated to his friend James Loeb and published by G. Schirmer (New York, 1916), and his well-known history of *The Institute of Musical Art, 1905-1926*, published by the Juilliard School of Music (New York, 1936), numerous textbooks, lectures, and addresses will be found listed in the catalogue of any large library. The first of such lectures, on "Vocal Training of Children," appeared in *Harper's Young People* for February 26, 1889. A list of his musical publications is appended to the present volume through the courtesy of G. Schirmer and Company.

Previous biographical studies of Dr. Damrosch have been practically limited to the "Biographical Sketch," based on an interview with the editor of the London *Musical Times*, and published by that journal in December, 1904; a brief article in *Grove's Dictionary of Music*; and various posthumous appreciations, the most notable of which were Irving Kalodin's admirable "A Pioneer Passes" in the New York *Sun* of October 30, 1937, and Edwin T. Rice's "A Tribute to Frank Damrosch," deservedly the leading article in the *Musical Quarterly* of April, 1939. Numerous interviews, notes, and sketches relating to Dr. Damrosch are contained in the files of *Harmony*, the magazine of the People's Singing Classes (for whose loan thanks are due to Mr. Theodore Schorske and Mr. John M. Goodale), and in the *Baton*, the organ of the Juilliard School.

Reminiscences and biographies of Dr. Damrosch's contemporaries have been helpful mainly in the subjective recreation of the world in which he moved. Two books by members of the Damrosch family deserve special mention

among this class of works: the sensitive *Music Is My Faith*, by David Mannes (New York, 1938), and Walter Damrosch's popular *My Musical Life* (2d ed., New York, 1930). Scarcely less useful are such books as Lilli Lehmann, *My Path through Life* (New York, 1914); Henry T. Finck, *My Adventures in the Golden Age of Music* (New York, 1926) and the same author's *Anton Seidl: A Memorial by his Friends* (New York, 1899); William Mason, *Memories of a Musical Life* (New York, 1901); John Tasker Howard, *Ethelbert Nevin* (New York, 1935); the memorial volume, *Otto Eidlitz, September 18, 1860-October 30, 1928* (New York, 1929); and the manuscript reminiscences of Mr. William D. Kilpatrick.

Henry C. Lahee's *Annals of Music in America* (Boston, 1922) was accepted as authority for the dates of various first performances. Other useful historical and reference works include H. E. Krehbiel's annual *Review of the New York Musical Season* for the years 1885-90, and the same author's *Chapters of Opera* (New York, 1908), *More Chapters of Opera* (New York, 1919), and *The Philharmonic Society of New York: A Memorial* (New York, 1892); also Irving Kolodin, *The Metropolitan Opera, 1883-1935* (New York, 1936); Nicholas Slonimsky, *Music Since 1900* (New York, 1937); David Ewen, *Music Comes to America* (New York, 1942); Ernest Newman's merciless *The Man Liszt* (New York, 1935); and Jacques Barzun's brilliant *Darwin, Marx, and Wagner* (New York, 1942). Useful historical pamphlets in the Damrosch collection are Frank Damrosch, *The Musical Art Society of New York: A Brief History* (New York, 1912); *The Anniversary Year of the Musical Art Society (20th Season): An Historical Sketch of Thirty-Seven Seasons of the Oratorio Society of New York (1873-1909)*; and *The 25th Anniversary of the PCU*.

Among magazine articles of some value are: James S. Parton, "Frank Damrosch and his People's Singing Classes,"

*Metropolitan Magazine* (1896), and Caroline Powell, "Some Memories of Leopold Damrosch," *National Magazine* (May, 1898).

Apart from these general works, others found useful only with reference to specific points receive mention here in lieu of the footnote references which would have unnecessarily encumbered a book of this character.

The Damrosch interest in the Revolution of 1848 is briefly mentioned in Christian Meyer, *Geschichte des Landes Posen* (Posen, 1881). Leopold Damrosch's doctoral dissertation is listed in *Verzeichnis der Berliner Universitäts-schriften 1810-1885* (Berlin, 1899), and references to his musical career in Germany are found in Richard Wagner's *My Life* (New York, 1911) and in the published correspondence of Hans von Bülow. The letter from Liszt quoted in the text is in the possession of the family. The other side of the long rivalry with Theodore Thomas may be read in Rose Fay Thomas, *Memoirs of Theodore Thomas* (New York, 1911); Charles Edward Russell, *The American Orchestra and Theodore Thomas* (New York, 1927); and *Theodore Thomas: A Musical Autobiography*, edited by George P. Upton (Chicago, 1905). Leopold Damrosch's letters from Bayreuth were printed in the *New York Sun* between August 13 and September 3, 1876.

The *Registers of the College of the City of New York* for the years 1870-1877 and the parallel article in the *Encyclopedia of Education* have been useful in evaluating the formal education of Frank Damrosch. Background for the Denver period was supplied by the *History of the City of Denver, Arapahoe County and Colorado* (Chicago, 1880); David Karsner, *Silver Dollar: The Story of the Tabors* (New York, 1932); and George F. Willison, *Here They Dug the Gold* (New York, 1931); more immediately relevant was *Music in Denver and Colorado (The Lookout from the Denver Public Library, Vol. 1, No. 1, Denver, January,*



1927). The files of the *Chicago Tribune* for the last week of February, 1885, illuminate the final episode of Frank's Western residence.

Felix Adler's *An Ethical Philosophy of Life Presented in Its Main Outlines* (New York, 1918) and T. V. Smith's "Ethical Culture Movement" in the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* were of assistance in elucidating principles by which Frank Damrosch appears to have been motivated throughout his mature life. Articles on the German Opera Company published in the *Musical Courier* of February 5 and March 4, 1891, are important for an understanding of family relationships in the later stages of his work at the Metropolitan Opera. Gregory Weinstein's *Reminiscences of an Interesting Decade, the Ardent Eighties* (New York, 1928) furnished a background for the rise of the People's Singing Classes; James K. Paulding's *Charles B. Stover, July 14, 1861-April 24, 1929* (New York, 1938) gives a sympathetic estimate of one of the founders of the movement and reveals the personality of another—the writer. Study of the Musical Art Society gains from an understanding of the parallel work of Charles Bordes in France, described in Octave Séré, *Musiciens français d'aujourd'hui* (Paris, 1911) and in Vincent d'Indy and others, *La Schola Cantorum* (Paris, 1925).

The published literature on more recent decades is naturally less ample. Mark Sullivan's *Our Times: The Turn of the Century, 1900-1904* (New York, 1926) has been consulted for the Dewey celebration, and John Philip Sousa's *Marching Along: Recollections of Men, Women and Music* (Boston, 1928) in connection with the World War Bandmasters' School. "The Muck Incident" is elucidated by a collection of clippings and manuscripts under that title in the Boston Public Library.

Letters to the present authors from Messrs. James K. Paulding, John M. Goodale, and Theodore Schorske have

been of great assistance in the chapters on the People's Singing Classes, as has a letter from Mr. Harry Harkness Flagler, illuminating the character of the man and the artist; and a letter from Professor Randall Thompson of the University of Virginia has aided materially in evaluating Dr. Damrosch's achievement as a musicologist. Personal recollections have come to us from too many sources to permit individual acknowledgment, and photographs have been generously loaned. By applying to personal communications the same standards of objectivity which they have endeavored to maintain throughout the work, the authors have assumed entire responsibility for statements of fact and expressions of opinion.

Mr. Theodore Schorske has given unstintingly of his time and met our many requests with wise and generous counsel. Especial thanks are due to him and to Dr. Damrosch's daughter, Helen Damrosch Tee-Van. Without their unfailing interest and constant co-operation the book could not have been written.

LUCY POATE STEBBINS

RICHARD POATE STEBBINS

APPENDIX

WORKS SELECTED FROM THE PROGRAMS OF THE  
MUSICAL ART SOCIETY OF NEW YORK  
EDITED BY DR. FRANK DAMROSCH

1. Gregor Aichinger, *Assumpta est Maria*.
2. Anonymous, *Alla Trinità (Melody from the 15th Century)*.  
Harmonized by Chas. Burney.
3. Gregorio Allegri, *Miserere mei Deus*.
4. Felice Anerio, *Christus surrexit*.
5. Jacques Arcadelt, *Ave Maria*.
6. Joh. Seb. Bach, *Christmas Oratorio, Part II*.
7. Joh. Seb. Bach, *God's time is the best*.
8. Joh. Seb. Bach, *Jesu, priceless treasure*.
9. D. Bortniansky, *Cherubim Song (No. 7)*.
10. S. Calvisius, *Joseph, tender Joseph mine*.
11. Anonymous, *Christmas Night, German folk-song*. Arranged  
for chorus of mixed voices by Frank Damrosch.
12. Giuseppe Corsi, *Adoramus te Christe*.
13. Peter Cornelius, *Christmas Song*.
14. Joh. Eccard, *Presentation of Christ in the Temple*.
15. G. Gabrieli, *Beata est Virgo Maria*.  
Michael Haydn, *Passion Motets*:
16. *Ecce vidimus eum*
17. *Caligaverunt oculi mei*
18. *Tenebrae factae sunt*
19. *Tenebrae factae sunt* (another setting).
20. Orlando di Lasso, *Timor et tremor venerunt super me*.
21. Volckmar Leisring, *O filii et filiae*.
22. Ant. Lotti, *Crucifixus, for double chorus*.
23. Ant. Lotti, *Crucifixus, for ten voices*.
24. W. A. Mozart, *Ave Verum*.

25. G. M. Nanini, *Hodie Christus natus est.*
26. Giov. P. da Palestrina, *Adoramus te.*
27. Giov. P. da Palestrina, *Hodie Christus natus est.*
28. Giov. P. da Palestrina, *Popule meus.*
29. M. Praetorius, *To us is born Immanuel* (1st setting).
30. M. Praetorius, *To us is born Immanuel* (2d setting).
31. M. Praetorius, *Rejoice ye Christian brethren.*
32. M. Praetorius, *Lo, how a rose e'er blooming.*
33. M. Praetorius, *The Morning Star on high is glowing.*
34. Josquin des Près, *Ave Verum.*
35. Joh. Peter Sweelinck, *Or sus, serviteurs du Seigneur.*
36. Joh. Peter Sweelinck, *O Seigneur, loué sera.*
37. Tomas Luis da Vittoria, *Ave Maria.*
38. Tomas Luis da Vittoria, *Jesu dulcis memoria.*
39. Tomas Luis da Vittoria, *O magnum mysterium.*
40. Giov. P. da Palestrina, *Gloria Patri.*
41. Aless. Scarlatti, *Tu es Petrus.*
42. Anonymous, *Three Old Bohemian Christmas Carols.* Edited  
and arranged by Carl Riedel.  
*Hail, all hail the glorious morn*  
*The Angels and the Shepherds*  
*Let all men sing God's praises*
43. Josquin des Près, *Miserere mei Deus.*
44. Giov. P. da Palestrina, *Peccantem me quotidie.*
45. Joh. Seb. Bach, *Be not afraid.*
46. Anonymous, *Easter Song (16th Century).* Arranged by M.  
Plüddemann.
47. Heinrich Schütz, *Sing to the Lord a New Song.*
48. Joh. Seb. Bach, *Ich steh' an deiner Krippen hier.*  
*Ihr Gestirn, ihr hohen Lüfte.*
49. Tomas Luis da Vittoria, *Pange lingua gloriosi.*
50. Giovanni Gabrieli, *Jubilare Deo.*
51. Giovanni Gabrieli, *Benedictus.*
52. Jos. Schwartz, *Spring.*
53. Giov. P. da Palestrina, *Ave Maria.*
54. Giov. P. da Palestrina, *Pater Noster.*

55. Franz Liszt, *Ave Maria*.
56. Franz Liszt, *O Filii et Filiae*, from "Christus."
57. Giovanni Gabrieli, *In Ecclesiis*.
58. J. P. Sweelinck, *Laudate Dominum*.
59. Servian Folk-Song, *Evening on the Sava*. Arranged by A. Arkhangelsky.
60. Folk-Song, *Round the Good Father's Door*. Arranged by A. Arkhangelsky.
61. Russian Folk-Song, *Saturday brings rainy weather*. Arranged by A. Arkhangelsky.
62. A. Arensky, *The Poison-Tree*.
63. M. Glinka, *Cherubim Song*.
64. A. Gretchaninoff, *Sun and Moon*.
65. Feodor Könemann, *'Neath our Earth, in gloomy Hades*.
66. Giov. P. da Palestrina, *Stabat Mater*.
67. Antonio Lotti, *Crucifixus*.
68. Francesco Durante, *Misericordias Domini*.
69. Giuseppe Verdi, *Pater Noster*.
70. Giov. P. da Palestrina, *O Gentle Death*. Edited by Peter Druffel.
71. Giov. P. da Palestrina, *Tu es Petrus*.
72. Orlando di Lasso, *Adoramus Te, Christe*.
73. Giov. P. da Palestrina, *Innocentes pro Christo*.
74. Anonymous, *Old Hymn to St. Caecilia*. Harmonized by Alexandre Guilmant.
75. Tomas Luis da Vittoria, *Tantum Ergo*.
76. Orlando di Lasso, *Magnificat*.
77. L. van Beethoven, *Short is our grief, everlasting is our gladness*.
78. L. van Beethoven, *To Mälzel*.
79. Joh. Seb. Bach, *Christmas Oratorio, Part I*. Edited by Max Spicker.
80. Melchior Franck, *In Thy Loving Arms*.
81. Adam de la Hale, *Robin Loves Me*.
82. Jacques Lefèvre, *The Pain of Love*. Arranged by Frank Damrosch.

83. Selim Palmgren, 1. *Lullaby*  
2. *Sorrow*  
3. *The Swing*.
84. Orlando di Lasso, *Audite Nova!* Arranged for Concert Use  
by Wilhelm Widmann.
85. Orlando di Lasso, *Farmer, what's that in your bag?* Arranged for Concert Use by Wilhelm Widmann.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

F. D., Frank Damrosch	MAS, Musical Art Society
L. D., Leopold Damrosch	PCU, People's Choral Union
W. D., Walter Damrosch	PSC, People's Singing Classes
IMA, Institute of Musical Art	

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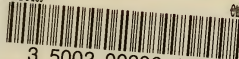
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1886.

Frank Damrosch

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DIED IN INFANCY

HANS

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